

The background of the cover is a traditional Chinese landscape painting in ink and light color. It depicts a mountainous terrain with a path or river winding through it. In the upper right, there are figures on horseback, possibly a hunting party or travelers, rendered in a more detailed, colorful style compared to the rest of the painting. The overall style is characteristic of the Sui and Tang dynasties.

CHINESE LANDSCAPE PAINTING

in the Sui and Tang Dynasties

MICHAEL
SULLIVAN

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CHINESE LANDSCAPE PAINTING

in the Sui and T'ang Dynasties

MICHAEL SULLIVAN

This book is a continuation of the author's study of the history of Chinese landscape painting that began with *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China* (1962), the first volume in the California Studies in the History of Art. In the earlier book Mr. Sullivan reached back to the origins of the conventional forms of landscape art in China, and explored the philosophical attitudes that it expressed. This volume carries the study through the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries, a critical formative era, when landscape painting finally emerged as a fully expressive art form in its own right.

Although the works of the T'ang masters are lost, this period is much richer in pictorial remains than that covered by the first volume. The wall-paintings and banners from Tun-huang, the paintings in newly-excavated tombs, the treasures of the Shōsōin Repository, and other authentic material enable the author for the first time to discuss style and technique. As the earlier volume showed, this is a tradition particularly susceptible to study as a symbolic language. Mr. Sullivan here follows the same general approach.

The book includes the first study in depth of the aesthetics of T'ang painting, an examination of the role of the artist in T'ang society,

CHINESE LANDSCAPE PAINTING



Landscape painted on the leather plectrum-guard of a lute.
Detail of upper half. Diameter 16.6 cm. Eighth century.
Shōsōin Museum, Nara, Japan.

MICHAEL SULLIVAN

*each venture
Is a new beginning, a road on the inarticulate.*
T. S. ELIOT

CHINESE LANDSCAPE PAINTING

VOLUME II

The Sui and Tang Dynasties

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This One



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Preface

This book is a continuation of the study of the origins of Chinese landscape painting which was published in 1962 under the title *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China*. In the Preface to that book I expressed the hope that it would be followed by further studies of Chinese landscape painting in its maturity, never dreaming that sixteen years would pass before the completion of a second volume.

The long delay has been due partly to my involvement in other work—the long-term study always gets pushed aside by the short-term one—and partly to the feeling, shared by every student of Chinese art in these times, that if one only waits a little longer, discoveries in China will throw fresh light on the subject of one's study. Some important discoveries have indeed been made during these years, and there are surely more to come, while we still await access to, and the full publication of, the Tunhuang wall-paintings and the opening of the undisturbed tomb of the T'ang Emperor Kao-tsung, which will undoubtedly enrich our knowledge of the landscape painting of the period. But time's winged chariot is at my back, and a time had come to put together as much as possible of the material now available for study. I can only hope that in the light of discoveries yet to come, the picture given here will not seem unduly naive or distorted.

In my earlier book, I tried to trace the language of Chinese landscape painting back to its remote origins. The period covered was a long one, and the actual remains of anything that could be called landscape painting meagre in the extreme. But what made that epoch so interesting was the sense one had of a groping towards the light, of painters striving to solve the simplest pictorial problems in their efforts to become articulate, of their wonder at their power, as they put it, to compress a thousand *li* of landscape into a few inches of silk, and of their growing self-awareness as creative individuals. Not the least fascinating aspect of the art of that age, even as late as the sixth century, was the contrast between the naiveté of landscape technique on the one hand and the sophistication of poetry and aesthetic theory on the other. For want of anything better, the

book was illustrated chiefly with stone engravings, stamped bricks, and other objects which gave scarcely a hint of what the landscape painting of the period must have been like. Much of the time, one was in the dark.

With this volume we emerge, if not into the full light of day, at least beyond the dawn. If the period of my earlier volume was that of the conception, birth, and infancy of the art, this volume can be said to embrace its youth and early manhood. The period covered—roughly from A.D. 600 to 900—is relatively short. It begins with the achievement of national unity and expansion under the Sui Dynasty after four centuries of division and the foreign occupation of half of China, rising to a climax at mid-point, and slowly dying away, to dissolve once more into the political and cultural chaos of the tenth century. There are still enormous gaps in the material available for study; the works of the Sui and T'ang masters are all lost, and copies are unreliable. But far more is known about the T'ang painters than about their predecessors, while a substantial amount of landscape painting has survived in the form of wall-paintings in cave-shrines and tombs, and paintings on silk and other materials from Tunhuang, the Shōsōin Repository and elsewhere. These give a much clearer impression of what landscape painting was like, and make it possible to discuss technique in a meaningful way, and even, from the eighth century onwards, to identify different styles.

The atmosphere of art has changed also. Landscape painters in the fifth and sixth centuries were steeped in Taoism. For them, fairies and immortals dwelt on every peak; and their style was compounded of charm and artificiality, for imaginary things were "easier to draw," as they said, than real things. In the Sui and T'ang, landscape comes down to earth, or rather, the landscape painter is now able to translate his knowledge of the real landscape into forms that match his experience. The age of innocence is left behind, and something of the wonder and magic is gone; but in the process landscape painting, by the end of the eighth century, has found itself as an expressive art form.

The T'ang was not, on the whole, a speculative age. Although Buddhism and Taoism both coloured the thinking of the intellectuals, there were no great T'ang philosophers, and men with a bent for metaphysics tended increasingly, after the middle of the dynasty, to be attracted away from the mainstream of Chinese thought into the relatively inaccessible pathways of esoteric Buddhism and Ch'an. Precisely how this influenced landscape painting, however, is an important question that in the present state of our knowledge cannot be fully answered.

If one studies the culture of the period as a whole one acquires a feeling—partly, it must be said, through reading T'ang poetry—of an ever-increasing richness, strength, range of expression, and sophistication of technique that for landscape painting must sometimes be inferred rather than demonstrated from surviving remains. This is not very satisfactory, but such impressions need not be wholly misleading. One might put it another way, and say that the achievement of the great tenth-century masters, especially of Ching Hao, Li Ch'eng, and Tung Yüan, is only explicable if we accept that immense advances in painting technique had been made in the eighth and ninth centuries, and look where we can for evidence of those advances. As we shall see, it is more abundant than one might expect.

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It would not have been possible for me to write this book if a number of scholars had not already laid the foundations of a study of T'ang painting. Chief among those to whom I owe so great a debt are Alexander Soper and the late William Acker. I have also profited much from the writings of Akiyama Terukazu, Shimada Shujio, and Yonezawa Yoshihō, to name only a few. James J. Y. Liu has guided me through the pleasures of T'ang poetry, while Miss Yasumura Yoshiko has given me valuable help with Japanese sources on the Shōsōin material. I also gratefully acknowledge both the careful editorial work done on the text by Meryl Lanning, and the constructive criticism by the publishers' readers, who perform such valuable service to authors, but must remain forever anonymous.

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Finally, as always, my gratitude goes to Khoan, who sometimes despaired of seeing the book in print, but whose constant encouragement, collaboration, and resourcefulness kept it in being and brought it to fruition at last.

M.S.

Sui and T'ang: the Historical and Cultural Background

The founding of the Sui Dynasty in 581, and the Sui conquest of the south eight years later, reunited China for the first time in three hundred fifty years. As Shih-huang-ti by bringing together the feudal states under the Ch'in had laid the foundation for the Han, so did the formidable Sui Wen-ti, and his equally formidable wife, impose a unity on China that laid the foundation for the T'ang. He created a vast realm that reached far out into Central Asia and drew Turks and Uighurs, Tanguts and Tibetans, into the orbit of Chinese civilisation. The barbarians who had been the conquerors of China were now her subjects. The second emperor, however, like the second emperor of the Ch'in, was over-ambitious and corrupt, and the dynasty fell in 618. But Wen-ti's achievement survived, and the relatively short period of civil war that preceded the founding of the T'ang caused no violent disruption of the political and cultural order that he had established.

There is not a great deal of information about Sui Wen-ti's patronage of the arts, at least so far as landscape painting is concerned. It is known, however, that, like many occupants of the dragon throne, the Sui emperors were collectors, for there exists an early T'ang catalogue of two hundred ninety-three old paintings, the great majority of which had been in the Sui imperial collection,¹ surviving into the Chen-kuan era (627-650). Wen-ti used Buddhism as a means of reinforcing the legitimacy and prestige of his dynasty, and of himself as World Ruler, *Cakravartin*. In the construction of temples and pagodas he strove to emulate Aśoka, and provided an immense amount of work for architects, sculptors, and wall-painters. Of this scarcely anything survives today except in the cave-shrines of north China.

As usually happened, the powerful new dynasty acted as a magnet, drawing artists to the capital (Ch'ang-an). A large number of painters were active there, some of whom, like Cheng Fa-shih and Tung Po-jen, had served the Northern Chou; while the great landscape painter

Chan Tzu-ch'ien has been active before 577, at the court of the Northern Ch'i.² Not only was there cultural continuity in the north, but many of the masters there were very versatile, skilled in Buddhist icon painting, secular figure painting, and landscape painting with figures. The south, meanwhile, was being drained of its talent. And so it came about that the southern tradition in landscape and figure painting was transmitted to the north, where the influence of the Nanking master Chang Seng-yu was dominant. For nearly a hundred fifty years after the founding of the Sui, we learn almost nothing of painting in southeast China.

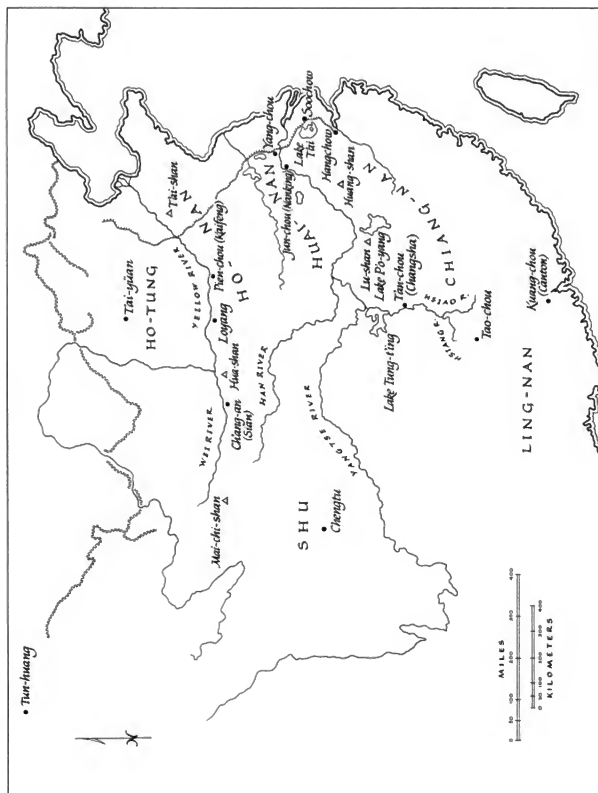
No landscapes on silk or paper survive that we can be sure are of Sui date, although there is one painting, attributed to Chan Tzu-ch'ien, that brings us close to Sui style (plates 40-42). Many paintings were lost after the fall of the dynasty. The richest remaining source of art is the wall-paintings at Tunhuang—though how representative these are of Sui landscape style in metropolitan China is debatable. "In the fifth year of the Wu Te era (622) of the sacred T'ang dynasty", a ninth-century art historian records,

all who had resisted (its establishment) were definitely quelled, and the two pretenders (Tou Chien-te and Wang Shih-chung) were captured. Then the works which had been kept secretly stored away in the two capitals (Ch'ang-an and Loyang) and the treasures that had followed in the retinue of (Yang Ti at) Wei-yang became the property of our...dynasty. Thereupon the Vice-Director of the Bureau of Agriculture, Sung Tsun-kuei, was ordered to load them on boats and transport them up the (Yellow) River westwards (to Ch'ang-an). They had almost brought them to the capital, and were passing (the rocks called) the Whetstone Pillars (the San-men Gorge), when suddenly (some of them) were carried away by the stream and sank, so that not more than ten or twenty percent were saved.³

Chang Yen-yüan goes on to say that at the founding of the T'ang there were only three hundred scrolls in the Inner Storehouse, and that all were paintings by pre-Sui artists. T'ang T'ai-tsung (reigned 627-650) was an enthusiast for painting; he was patron of the great Yen Li-pen, and he began to buy from private collectors. His collection was by no means all acquired by purchase, however. He was a passionate admirer of the calligraphy of Wang Hsi-chih (303-379), and hearing that the original of the Lan-t'ing script was in the hands of a certain monk who refused to show it to anyone, he sent an agent, Hsiao I, who extracted it from its unfortunate owner by a trick.⁴ Many old paintings must have come into the imperial collection by such methods, but in the meantime the losses must have been great.

Periods of national expansion are not necessarily periods of great artistic advance. New dynasties, East and West, tend at first to make use of existing styles rather than to create new ones, for practical needs are pressing. In China the art of the first decades of a new dynasty sometimes reflected, or exploited, advances made during a previous period of chaos and breakdown, rather than creating new styles. These come later, with the inevitable slowing down of national momentum, when there is more time for reflection and experiment.

Although poets and prose writers were already beginning to react against the artificiality of sixth-century writing, the painters of Sui and early T'ang still accepted in great measure the styles



and aesthetic ideals of the Six Dynasties period. When they write of painters such as Cheng Fa-shih, Chan Tzu-ch'ien, and Tung Po-jen, ninth-century art historians use such epithets as "refined," "lavish," "ingenious"; they never speak of their depth of thought or feeling as they do of the later painters. The poetry of the time is full of confidence and optimism, conveyed for instance in the Emperor Li Shih-miin's poem on a triumphant military expedition. The diction is strong, clear, unadorned, the mood unreflecting:

... To the west were the natives of Chiang, who played on flutes and
cymbals to welcome us.
Here the Huns themselves laid down their arms and surrendered.
The soldiers of Han returned in triumph.
High in the air flew the banner of victory.
A tablet was engraved with their names, for the sake of posterity.
In battle with the barbarians peace was assured,
And on the altar of heaven we sang our victory.⁵

The early T'ang poems that express more than a conventional, almost Elisabethan, melancholy—a legacy from the sixth century—are generally those that speak of war, partings, homesickness, the death of a friend on the frontier.

The painters who enjoyed court patronage during the seventh century—and we hear of none other—were for the most part figure painters. Painting was often an official, commemorative, or illustrative art, and landscape a setting for human action rather than a theme in itself. We hear nothing of the individual artist's private contemplation of nature that had inspired southern painters such as Tsung Ping in the fifth century,⁶ and was again to become an accepted mode of life in the middle and late years of the T'ang. If there were such painters active in the seventh century, they must have been recluses indeed.

During the early years of the dynasty creative men were carried along on a general wave of optimism and unity of purpose; and while they continually risked the hazards of court life, no major political event, even the usurpation of Wu Tse-t'ien in 690, significantly influenced their fortunes or changed the climate in which the arts were practised. Indeed, under Kao-tsung and the self-styled "Emperor" Wu, China enjoyed sixty years of prosperity and good government. Patronage stressed what we would call major projects, such as the building and decorating of palaces, temples, and ancestral halls, the excavating of cave-shrines, and the commemorating in scrolls and wall-paintings of historical events and stirring achievements. Wu Tse-t'ien was an enthusiastic collector of calligraphy, while distinguished artists who enjoyed her support included Li Ssu-hsün, Yin Chung-jung, and Ts'ao Yüan-k'uo. But her efforts to build up a collection of works by contemporary masters were, on one occasion at least, thwarted by her notorious young favourite Chang I-chih.⁷ It seems that Chang recommended to the Empress that she summon all the skilled painters in the realm to restore the old masterpieces in the imperial collection. Chang, however, set them to work making exact replicas, and then kept most of the originals to himself.

Some time after Chang's death in 705 these authentic works came into the hands of the painter, official, and connoisseur Hsieh Ch'i, who had been a protégé of Wu Tse-t'ien and now,

like Li Ssu-hsün, was serving under Emperors Chung-tsung (705–710) and Jui-tsung (710–713). One of Chung-tsung's first acts on coming to the throne was to build the tombs of members of the imperial family murdered by Wu Tse-t'ien and to have them embellished with paintings (plates 34 and 46). But artistic patronage under these two singularly ineffective rulers was probably at a low ebb. The paintings acquired by Hsieh Ch'i later, under Emperor Hsüan-tsung but without his knowledge, came into the possession of Prince Fan, the Emperor's brother—who, in a panic that they might be discovered in his private collection, consigned the lot to the flames.

The reign of Hsüan-tsung (713–756) opened vigorously and flowered luxuriously. Much has been written about the brilliance and cosmopolitanism of his court, the elaborate feasts and festivals, the orchestras, the troupes of actors, dancers, and musicians, the prevalence of performers from Central Asia, and it need not be repeated here. We need only note how the liberality of Ming-huang (the Brilliant Emperor), as Hsüan-tsung came to be called, drew to Ch'ang-an—and to a lesser extent to Loyang—talent from all over the empire.

This was the period of fruition. The groundwork had been laid, the empire was secure. In or out of office, the scholar-gentry could enjoy the pleasures of life, of companionship, of nature, and of the arts, untroubled by fears for the dynasty.⁸ There is, in the verses of the poet-painter Wang Wei, for example, a deep mellowness, a serene acceptance of the world, that is typical of the feelings of the literati at mid-century. Grief is a private thing, for the death of a friend or a long separation:

On my roof spring pigeons call
And round the village almond trees bloom white
Men take axes to cut the high branches
Shoulder hoes to inspect the conduits
Returning swallows know their own nests
The old resident scans the new calendar
About to drink I suddenly hold my hand
With a pang for a friend on a far journey.⁹

Hsüan-tsung's elder brother Prince Ning (Li Hsien, who died in 731) and his younger brother Prince Fan both had active salons which attracted the leading poets and painters of the day.¹⁰ For a time the painter Wu Tao-tzu was attached to Prince Ning in the official capacity of Companion (*yu*). But after the Prince's death, the Emperor seems to have had a virtual monopoly of royal patronage. Hsüan-tsung, who as Chang Yen-yüan said, loved the arts, was a voracious collector¹¹ and patronised almost all the great names among the painters of his reign—for example, Wang Wei, Chang Tsao, Han Kan, Chang Hsüan. He had so high an opinion of Wu Tao-tzu that he took him into his service, after which this master was forbidden to paint except under an imperial edict; this however did not bar him from decorating the walls of Buddhist temples, of which he did a prodigious amount.

Chang Yen-yüan tells us that Hsüan-tsung acquired books and paintings from all over the empire.¹² In general, it was sufficient for an emperor merely to show interest, and his anxious subjects would hasten to offer their treasures to the throne. As Chang Yen-yüan relates,

Hsüan-tsung appointed a succession of Imperial Commissioners for the Finding of Pictures and Paintings; and there were others, including a foreign trader named Mu Yü, who ingratiated themselves with the Emperor by blackmailing private collectors into giving up their treasures, or by rewarding them with presents and recommendations for titles. Experts, and even dealers, Chang reports, were in high favour at court. The Emperor also "ordered the connoisseurs of that time to affix their ornamental signatures and write colophons"; and Chang lists (as he does for the reign of T'ai-tsung) the high officials responsible for the conservation and mounting of paintings. In 754 Hsüan-tsung founded the Han-lin Academy of Letters, Han-lin Yüan. A number of prominent painters held appointments in the Han-lin, but there was no Imperial Academy of Painting as such.

At mid-century China was at the climax of her power and prosperity, when it must have seemed that the sun could never set on the glories of the T'ang. Even the disastrous defeat of Chinese armies at the hands of Muslims in Central Asia in 751 did nothing to disturb the tenor of life at home. Then, in 752, the dictator Li Lin-fu—himself a talented landscape painter—died.¹³ Open rivalry broke out between the Yang family, whose leading lights, Yang Kuo-chung and Yang Kuei-fei, were favorites of the Emperor, and the imperial concubine's adopted "son" An Lu-shan, an army commander of non-Chinese descent on the northeastern frontier. In 755 An Lu-shan rebelled and marched on the capital, which fell early in the following year. The Emperor and those of his court who could escape fled westwards, sacrificing Yang Kuei-fei to the fury of the bodyguard, who refused to escort him a step further so long as she lived. In 757 An Lu-shan died, his army was defeated, and the court returned to Ch'ang-an. Meanwhile, Hsüan-tsung had abdicated, to live out the remaining six years of his life in a remote part of the palace.

But worse was to come. In 763, Tibetans and Tanguts entered and despoiled the capital. They were repulsed by General Kuo Tzu-i, only to be replaced by China's mercenary allies the Uighurs, who occupied Ch'ang-an, raping and pillaging while the Chinese authorities looked on helpless. In 783, troops sent from Kansu to garrison Ch'ang-an mutinied. Once again the Emperor, Te-tsung, fled, and was not safely restored to his palace till the following year. By 788 the Tibetans had occupied much of the northwest, including the Tunhuang region of Kansu, with results momentous for Buddhist art in the eaves there, which were not liberated until 848. From then on, only rivalry between Tibetans and Uighurs, and between the now powerful warlords who controlled the provinces, prevented the collapse of the dynasty.

During these years of chaos, the court culture of Loyang and Ch'ang-an was almost wiped out. The music and ballet schools were destroyed, the performers killed or dispersed, while many scholars, painters, and poets fled to the south or went into retirement, waiting for a return to peace. The loss of works of art must have been incalculable. Chang Yen-yüan merely records that at this time a great many works were destroyed or scattered, and that the new Emperor Su-tsung (756-762) "did not care much about preserving and owning them, but distributed them among members of the Imperial Clan." But they too had no use for them and "sold them into unworthy hands. But 'things have their own destinations,' and they collected together (again) in the houses

of amateurs. After the troubles of the reign of Te-tsung (780-805) they were once more scattered and lost, which is most painful to think of."¹⁴

Yet the reign of Te-tsung, and more particularly that of his successor Hsien-tsung (806-821), was a time of partial recovery, at least at Ch'ang-an. Writers active at this time—"flourishing" would be too positive a word for men who, it seems, were constantly being shifted about from post to post, appointed and demoted, banished and recalled—include some of the greatest names in T'ang literature and poetry: Han Yü, Liu Tsung-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi, Po Chü-i, Yüan Chen, Li Ho. The poetry of this autumnal age has a new seriousness and depth of feeling, and is often bitter in tone. Writers and poets deplore the influence of the eunuchs at court, the Emperor's growing absorption in Taoist magic, the wretched condition of the mass of the people burdened by taxes.¹⁵ They write now, not of victory, but of the defeat of the imperial armies. The new note had already been struck, in 756, in Tu Fu's "Lament for Ch'en-t'ao":

In winter's first month from good families in ten prefectures
The son's blood became the water in the Ch'en-t'ao marsh.
The countryside is deserted, the sky is clear, no sound of battle,
For forty thousand loyal troops have died on the same day.
The Tatar horde returns with blood-washed arrows,
Still singing songs, to drink in our market place.
The citizens turn their heads and cry out to the north;
Day and night they still yearn for the imperial army to come.¹⁶

This note was to be echoed increasingly as the T'ang slowly decayed. There is a growing nostalgia for the days before the An Lu-shan Rebellion, and anger at the plight of the people pours out, for example, in Po Chü-i's "The New Silk Jacket":

So many go cold and I am unable to help them—
Why should I alone be warm?
My heart knows the peasants' hardship
On farms and in mulberry groves;
My ears ring with the cries
Of the starving and cold.¹⁷

The effect upon art of the train of disasters of 755-784, and the slowly deepening decay that followed them, was enormous. Many of the great families that had provided the milieu and patronage for arts and letters had migrated permanently to the Chiangnan region in the southeast. Ch'ang-an still attracted men who sought a career in government service, but outside the capital the most influential figures were no longer the landed gentry but the military governors. So it is not altogether surprising that from this time forward we hear almost nothing about landscape painters at court, and indeed less and less about any painters in the north. Those northern landscapists who are briefly referred to by the art historians—Huang-fu I, Ts'ên Ts'an, Li I, for example—are high officials and amateurs. Court patronage must have continued; there must have been artists in the imperial studios who decorated the rebuilt palaces, but they are scarcely

mentioned. Now court art goes indoors, and the typical northern painter of the mid-T'ang—the years roughly between 770 and 820—is Chou Fang, whose subject is not landscape but the cloistered, lamplit world of the Inner Apartments of the Forbidden City, where the clamour of the world outside and the sound of the wind in the pines alike could not be heard. Where had the landscape painters gone?

During the period of the Rebellion and its aftermath, many members of the educated class had taken refuge in the southeast, as far from the hazards of court life as it was possible to go and still remain in the civilised world. On their hopes for the revival of the dynasty Edwin Pulleyblank had this to say: "I have been especially struck by the way the most significant intellectual movements can be traced back to the refugee scholars who congregated in the lower Yangtse during the rebellion period. The next generation developed further the ideas of their predecessors and, carrying the movement to Ch'ang-an, tried, if my picture is correct, to apply themselves to a renaissance of the dynasty."¹⁸ During the peaceful Yüan-ho era (806–821) it must have seemed that a new age was dawning, and that there would be a chance to rectify the mistakes of the recent past. Han Yü and Liu Tsung-yüan were among the leaders of the *ku-wen* (ancient prose) movement which aimed, by attacking artificiality and decadence in literary style and upholding the ancient Confucian virtues of plainness and integrity, to bring about a cultural and moral rebirth.

But the stability was illusory; the Emperor was at the mercy of the eunuchs, the provinces at the mercy of the warlords. Pulleyblank continues:

The defeat of Wang Shu-wen's party in 805, which strengthened the power of the eunuchs and removed from political life some of the most ardent spirits, must have discouraged would-be reformers. The way the eunuchs were able, thereafter, to murder one emperor after another added to the gloom, no doubt. In 835 came the disaster of the Sweet Dew incident. A plot against the eunuchs which had the connivance of the Emperor Wen-tsung was discovered by the eunuchs; many officials were massacred and the three Chief Ministers were put to death as traitors. It is small wonder that the literati retreated more and more into the consolations of poetry and *belles-lettres*, and into Taoism.

With the massacre of 835, the brief autumn of T'ang culture was over, and the long winter had set in.

The southeast—the Chiangnan, "South of the River"—was a region where some of the great families dispossessed by Wu Tse-t'ien had long since carved out big estates. Through the eighth century the population and prosperity of this part of China steadily grew, almost untouched by the convulsions that were tearing the north apart. The discovery of the beauty of Chiangnan—or rather its rediscovery, for this region had been the inspiration of poetry, painting, and aesthetics in the Three Kingdoms and Six Dynasties—was a strong influence on the development of landscape painting in the second half of the T'ang Dynasty. The discovery was first made by the poets; or rather, the poets were better equipped, in the eighth century at least, to describe it than were the landscape painters, still breaking free from earlier conventions. Poetry, indeed, must have been

almost as rich a source of inspiration to the landscape painters as was the landscape itself.

Instances where the northern landscape inspired poets at this time are relatively few. The Sung art historian Kuo Jo-hsü says that the verses of Li I (died 827) were very popular in Li's lifetime and that his poem "The Early Morning Journey" was used over and over again by art lovers for screen-paintings, particularly such lines as these:

Before Hsi-lo peak, the sands are like snow;
Outside Shou-hsiang city, the moonlight is like hoarfrost¹⁹

—lines referring to the desert region of modern Inner Mongolia. We have no idea what this actually looked like, as no screen-paintings of the period have survived. But the desert scenes which form the background of some of the late T'ang wall-paintings at Tunhuang may perhaps give a hint. The overwhelming influence on poets and painters alike was of the far more hospitable landscape of the south, particularly that of Kiangsu and Chekiang, and the scenery along the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers in Hunan. In his celebrated *Record of the Cold Fountain Arbour* (Han ch'uan chi) written in 823 when he was governor of Hangchow, Po Chü-i describes the delights of his retreat near Ling-yin Su in language that perfectly evokes the lush, tranquil beauty of the south:

In spring I love the smell of the grass, the filling out of the green upon the trees, which soothe and purify the spirit and exhilarate the humours of the blood. On summer nights I love the trickling of the fountain, the chill of the breeze, which wash care away and dissolve the fumes of wine. Here the mountain trees are my roof, the rocky cliffs my screen. Clouds rise from the rafters of the shrine; the water is level with its steps. As you sit and enjoy this scene you may wash your feet without rising from your couch; while you lie in intimate converse with it, you may dangle your fish-hook with your hand still on the pillow. Nay, more! So clean and clear is the flowing stream, so pure and fresh, so soft and slippery that whether you be layman or monk, the mere sight of it will take the dust from eye and ear, the grime from heart and tongue, without the need for washing or rinsing...²⁰

Po Chü-i's friend Yüan Chen wrote essays on the beauties of Tao-chou in Hunan, which in turn influenced Liu Tsung-yüan's more famous *Eight Records of Excursions* in nearby Yung-chou, and together they created a new literary genre of descriptive nature prose.²¹ Subjects such as these cried out to be painted, as we read in "Snow Poem," by the ninth-century poet Cheng Ku, which Kuo Jo-hsü says was much on men's lips at the time:

Wild swirling outside the priest's hut, damp with the steam of tea;
A fine sprinkle on the joy-house where cold weakens the wine.
On the river as twilight falls, most paintable of all,
The fisher pulls on his straw cape, and heads for home.²²

This kind of direct, descriptive, unadorned landscape poetry that occurs also in the work of Po Chü-i, Li Po, and Tu Fu was a far cry from the elegant artificiality of the landscape poems of the Han and Six Dynasties. In describing a real landscape, it presented a new kind of challenge to

the painters—to create a style rich and subtle enough both to depict nature as it is, and to convey the kind of poetic feelings that landscape evokes. The brush line now became broken and expressive, the ink tone rich and subtly modulated, while the work was charged with a new intensity of feeling. At last, if the impression we gain chiefly from the literature is correct, it seems that a landscape painting, like a poem, was able to convey deep feeling and emotion, and to give the viewer the sense of actually being in the country.

After the terrible events of 835, the literati withdrew further and further from active involvement in court and government, looking on helplessly as a succession of disasters overtook the T'ang. It is not the death of the dynasty that is surprising, but that it was such an unconscionable time a-dying. In 860 famine provoked a massive peasant rebellion in Chekiang, followed in 874 by a still greater uprising led by Wang Hsien-chih and Huang Ch'ao, who before long had captured all of eastern China.²³ Huang Ch'ao was defeated by Turkish allies of the central government in 878 and withdrew to Canton, which he laid waste in the following year, slaughtering over a hundred thousand foreign residents in the process. He then turned northwards again. In 880 he captured Loyang, while the Emperor fled to Shu (Szechwan). In the following year he took Ch'ang-an and proclaimed himself Emperor of a new dynasty, the Ch'i. Not till 884 was he caught and killed, but in the meantime the capitals had been ravaged by contending armies of Chinese and Turks.

In 885 the Emperor returned to Ch'ang-an, leaving his general Wang Chien as governor in Shu, where he soon assumed the title of king. As the north fell deeper and deeper into chaos, Wang Chien's remote and peaceable kingdom became a haven of refuge for scholars and artists who came not only from the northern capitals but from as far away as the Chiangnan region and the deep south. It was thus in Chengtu, in the last two decades of the ninth century and the first two of the tenth, that culture in the T'ang style had its last brief flowering. Wang Chien set up a Han-lin Academy of his own, to which painters were attached; and scholarship and painting flourished. But in the north, the warlords fell upon one another, and all was lost. In the ensuing civil wars the ancient heartland of Chinese civilisation was rent so completely in fragments that, although it revived somewhat under the Northern Sung, it never again became the focus of Chinese economic or cultural life.

The suppression of foreign religions between 843 and 845, and the destruction and deconsecration of vast numbers of temples and monasteries throughout the land were regarded by patriots as essential measures to halt the drain on China's shrinking economy. But to art lovers this was a disaster, for in the process the wall-paintings by the T'ang masters, which included many landscapes, were nearly all destroyed or allowed to crumble away through neglect. Our impression of painting in the last years of the T'ang is further obscured by the smoke of war and the almost total lack of literary evidence after mid-century, except for one early Sung work, the *I-chou ming-hua lu* (Record of Famous Painters of I-chou, written between 1004 and 1008), which deals only with the painters of Shu. The poetry of the period is steeped in a despair that is

now no longer a mere literary convention, but a true expression of the feeling of the literati. Taoism was of little use except as a means of escape, Buddhism crippled by the proscription of 845, and Confucianism still waiting in the wings for its return to the centre of the stage in the eleventh century. Nothing seemed to have much meaning, except one's own experience and emotions. Writers tended increasingly to bury themselves in the past, or in fantasy, or in transient affairs with singsong girls. Poetry became a private thing, intense, passionate, obscure, sometimes erotic. Lu T'ung, who lost his life in the massacre of 835, wrote a poem called "The Eclipse of the Moon," which, like many ninth-century poems, clothes in allegory and symbolism the poet's despair at the drift of political events. These lines seem to refer to the preoccupied Emperor's refusal to recognize the merits of an eclipsed official:

... I fear that Heaven, just like a man,
Can lose its sight by lusting after beauty.
But the time is wrong, it is not spring
All things have passed their prime of loveliness,
The blue of the hills is the colour of broken shards,
The ice piles mountain-high on the green water
The flowers have withered, their woman's charms all gone,
The birds are dead, their songs vanished.
In brutish winter what is there to love
For Heaven to gaze on till an eye goes blind?²⁴

For the painters also, in this winter of their discontent, it was a time of looking back. It was as if they knew that the great days of the T'ang were past: now all that could be done was to contemplate and assess the achievement of their predecessors. The first major history of Chinese painting, and by many centuries the first history of art ever written, Chang Yen-yüan's *Li-tai ming-hua chi*, Record of Famous Painters of Successive Dynasties, was completed (or at least the preface was written) in 847; Chu Ching-hsüan's *T'ang-ch'ao ming-hua lu*, Record of Famous Painters in the T'ang Dynasty, was compiled at about the same time. Both writers speak of the eighth century as the age of the giants in painting. Neither of them has very much to say about the state of painting in their own time. Chang Yen-yüan on the whole deplors it. "Modern painters", he writes, "rather tend to excel in (the mere) reproduction of shapes. Though they do achieve formal likeness (verisimilitude) yet they are without spirit resonance (*chi'yiin*), and while providing (their work) with all the colours complete, yet they fail in their brush technique: how could such be called painting? Alas, among men of our time this art has nowhere reached its full perfection."²⁵

Chang Yen-yüan here suggests a finicky realism in contemporary art very different in character from the obscure expressionist outpourings of the poets of his day. He does not indicate, for example, that a painter could translate into pictorial images such an almost surrealist vision as Li Ho conjures up in the fifth and sixth lines of his short poem "On a Painting of the Walls of Yung-tung" (a port in Chekiang):

Wheeling, the River of Heaven, day breaking bleakly,
 Crows flying up from lofty battlements.
 Distant sails signpost the shores of Yüeh,
 From the cold ramparts hang the swords of Wu.
 Mussels are born in the chill sunshine,
 Fish-eggs spurt into the white waves.
 As water-flowers spray their head-bands,
 With drums and flags they welcome the night tide.²⁶

We do not know whether there were any major technical or stylistic developments in ninth-century landscape painting that went significantly beyond the achievements of the late eighth-century masters Chang Tsao, Li Ling-sheng, and Wang Mo, who seem to have anticipated even the Zen expressionists of the end of the dynasty. But there are a few hints here and there suggesting that painters in Chang Yen-yüan's time were more interesting than he gives them credit for. P'ei Hsü in the time of T'ung-tsung (780-805) painted landscapes that were "full of deep thought"; and the early sources speak of the "dangerously ingenious" Wu T'ien (Wu Pin), and of the "wildness" and "strangeness" of the work of Chang Hsün, T'iao Kuang-yin, and Sun Wei—whose technique the Sung critic Kuo Jo-hsü similarly speaks of as wild and strange.²⁷ What little evidence there is suggests that the ninth-century painters, having inherited from the eighth century a wide range of styles and techniques, from the linear realism of Li Ssu-hsün to the ink-flinging of the eccentrics and action painters, had little need, and less encouragement, to break new ground, although some of them seem to have practised the more extreme styles with total disregard for the accepted rules of painting.

Painting in the ninth century became a private art. Imperial commissions were few, and after 860 must have practically ceased, except in Shu. The few Buddhist temples restored after 845 could have offered very little in the way of employment for fresco painters. As in other times of breakdown in Chinese history, it was every man for himself. There was no focus of patronage; the typical landscape painter of mid-century was the Chekiang recluse Sun Wei, who went as a refugee to Shu, and the obscure monk painter Hsü Piao-jen, whose work Chang Yen-yüan was able to describe only because he met him personally. With the gentry class uprooted and demoralised, even such contacts as these must have been rare and fleeting. Painters were losing touch with one another; collectors scattered, their collections destroyed. But among the landscape painters, known perhaps only to a few intimates, was one great figure, Ching Hao, who, although born before the end of the T'ang, belongs to the chaotic era of the Five Dynasties. He was a solitary man who lived for many years as a farmer in the T'ai-hang mountains of Shansi, but his influence reached out to lay the foundation for a new classical school of landscape painting in the tenth century and early Sung.

The Painter in T'ang Society

Even a cursory survey of the role of the painter in T'ang public and private life gives us an impression of the changing atmosphere of T'ang art through three centuries. In the Sui and the first century or so of the T'ang, painters whose names are recorded were, almost without exception, professionals, men who held appointments at court chiefly by virtue of their skill as painters rather than as administrators, or who worked in a more humble capacity in the palace *ateliers*. There was as yet no Academy, so court painters were often given high-sounding titles such as Palace Grandee without Specific Function or were allotted purely honorific military titles, such as Chief of the Whirlwind Cavalry or Martial Spirit Inspiring Captain, to distinguish them from civil officials. The post of *Ssu-ma*, roughly equivalent to Assistant Prefect, was given throughout the dynasty, often as a demotion, to a number of officials and painters who had displeased their superiors, including Po Chü-i and Chang Tsao. It carried little authority but at least, as Po Chü-i remarked, the holder had a roof over his head and could provide for his family.¹

Several members of the Yen family held senior official posts through a combination of artistic and administrative talents. Yen P'i was a high official under the Northern Chou and Sui,² and his son Yen Li-te became chief of the Service of the Imperial Wardrobe under T'ang T'ai-tsung and in 627 Chief Architect to the Throne and president of the Board of Works.³ Li-te's younger brother Li-pen, a painter and a bureaucrat, became a member of the Council of State and president of the Grand Secretariat of the Right. Chang Yen-yüan quotes the rather caustic comment in Li-pen's biography in the *T'ang-shu* that "the Minister of the Right chases after praise with the reds and blues" (i.e., painting)⁴, protesting that this slight is undeserved, and that Yen Li-pen was in fact an able administrator. But no matter how high their rank, even men of the calibre of Yen Li-pen were servants of the Emperor, receiving their orders and com-

missions like any skilled artisan. When palace attendants, calling Yen Li-pen to paint the ducks that T'ai-tsung admired on the palace lake, shouted out "summon the *hua-shih!*" (master painter) and Yen Li-pen had to come at the double, brush in hand, he was deeply offended at being addressed as a superior kind of craftsman rather than as a gentleman. When he retired he is said to have told his children: "In my youth I was fond of reading books and writing compositions, yet now I am known only for my paintings, and have to do servant's work in person—there is no greater insult! You should take profound warning not to practice this art."⁵

In the first half of the eighth century, Li Su-hsün, Li Chao-tao, and Wu Tao-tzu all held official titles largely if not entirely by virtue of their artistic skill. But there were still no special ranks for court painters. In 754 Hsüan-tsung founded the Han-lin Academy of Letters (Han-lin Yüan). Yonezawa says that there was attached to it "a society of court painters which was virtually an art academy."⁶ Kuo Jo-hsü mentions several painters of the ninth century as being appointed *tai-chao*,⁷ in attendance, in the Han-lin, and the custom was followed by Wang Chien at Chengtu after 903. But neither Chang Yen-yüan nor Chu Ching-hsüan mentions any painters as connected with the Han-lin Yüan, nor do they refer to Yen Li-pen or Han Kan, who were obviously "in attendance," as *tai-chao*. In fact, they do not use the term at all.⁸ We can assume that any "society of court painters" that may have been attached to the Han-lin Yüan was a purely informal one.

Lesser figures such as Wang Ting, Wang Chih-shen, and Feng Shao-cheng held posts as director or supervisor in the Supervisorate of the Imperial Workshops, Shao-fu-chien, which was divided into three sections. The Left Section, Tso-shu, was concerned with the making and decorating of chariots and palanquins, and with painting, carving, and lacquerwork.⁹ A number of the minor artists mentioned by the T'ang historians were probably employed there. Chang Yen-yüan often refers to this department rather quaintly as the Shang-fang (imperial workshop)—a term borrowed from the usage of the Han Dynasty.

But another type of painter was emerging into prominence in the eighth century, one whose official rank had nothing to do with his art, which he practiced in his spare time—namely the scholar painter, who would from this time on increasingly dominate the world of Chinese painting, while the court artist and professional were relegated more and more to an inferior status. Hsieh Ch'i, for example, came of a long line of scholars.¹⁰ He not only held high office as Chao-wen-kuan hsüeh-shih, Scholar in the College for the Glorification of Literature, but he was, in the 710-713 era, appointed vice-president of the Imperial Chancellery and concurrently president of the Board of Rites and of the Board of Works. He was close to the throne, and he was a distinguished calligrapher. There are no indications that any of his appointments required him to paint, but he was a versatile and prolific artist, and we can assume that he painted simply for the pleasure of it.

Wang Wei is of course the prototype of the scholar official who painted in his leisure hours, of which he seems to have had many. He was in and out of office, relatively senior posts alternating with long periods of retirement. The only occasion when he is known to have painted

on order is when, temporarily detained as a suspected collaborator after the An Lu-shan Rebellion, he was obliged to do wall-paintings for his custodian, the Grand Secretary Ts'ui Yüan. This does not mean that T'ang gentlemen artists never received material rewards for their work. If not with cash, scholarly painters and calligraphers could be repaid with a discreet gift of gold bars, silk, a fur coat, hospitality, protection, or patronage, bestowed in such a way that their dignity as amateurs and gentlemen was not compromised. When Wang Wei painted landscapes in the mansion of Junior Counsellor Yü, or a wall for the monks of Tz'u-en Ssu, we can be sure that he was appropriately rewarded. Chang Tsao too augmented his modest income as a junior official in this way. Chang Yen-yüan records that his own forebears, who knew Chang Tsao well and frequently invited him to the family home in Ch'ang-an, commissioned him—the word *ling* is unequivocal—to paint an eight-panel landscape screen for their house; and Chu Ching-hsüan said that he was so admired that he could ask any price he liked for his pictures. No stigma, indeed, seems to have attached to a gentleman selling his work, provided he did not prostitute his talents.¹¹ Scholars would sell model examination answers to booksellers; poets often sold their poems to members of the Music Academy, who set them to music; and composing a tomb inscription was a task for which even the great Han Yü would not hesitate to accept a fee.

The Northern Sung critic and connoisseur Li Ch'ih claimed that Yen Li-pen and Yang Yen, prime minister in the 785-805 era, "were able to paint without prejudice to their status as *grandes*," just as "Wang Wei and Cheng Ch'ien were able to paint without prejudice to their status as scholars."¹² However true this may have been of the last three mentioned, the well-known story quoted earlier suggests that with Yen Li-pen it was far from being the case. What Li Ch'ih fails to point out is that Yen Li-pen was at the emperor's beck and call simply as a painter, and that was demeaning.

The amateur gentleman painter was of course nothing new. There had been such long before the T'ang, men like Yang Hsiu of the Three Kingdoms, Wang I of the Chin, Hsieh Chih and Ku Pao-kuang of the Liu Sung, men who held high office as scholars and officials and painted for their own pleasure. But not until the T'ang Dynasty did the notion take hold that *because* these men were members of the intellectual aristocracy their painting must be superior to that of the professional painters, and that their quality as men was revealed in their art. "From ancient times," Chang Yen-yüan writes, "men who have excelled in painting have all been men robed and capped and of noble descent, retired scholars and lofty-minded men."¹³ In the eighth century the critic Chang Huai-kuan had written of Wang Hsi-chih: "When we look at his complete calligraphy, we lucidly perceive the aim and spirit of his whole life, as if we were meeting him face to face."¹⁴ Chang Yen-yüan applies the same standard to the painter Yang Yen: "When I look at the landscapes of Master Yang, I can see in my mind that he was a man—imposing and unconventional."¹⁵

In the eighth century also we begin to encounter for the first time the painter who is a recluse or an eccentric. Among the former was Lu Hung, who lived in retirement on Mount Sung and who, when Hsüan-tsong on coming to the throne in 713 offered him a high post, refused it. Po

Chü-i's friend the bamboo painter Hsiao Yüeh retired to live in Hangchow; Chang Chih-ho spent much of his time fishing on Lake Tung-t'ing; Tao-fen became a monk. The *Pi-fa chi* attributed to Ching Hao calls Hsiang Jung a recluse; he may have been, and his descendants Hsiang Chu and Hsiang Hsin certainly were.

As for eccentrics, even in the K'ai-yüan period (713-742) we read of Shih (P'ei) Yu-jan, poet, painter, musician, and unsuccessful scholar, who died at the age of thirty-nine, probably of drink. Chang Yen-yüan relates that one night Shih got drunk and lay down in the street. This was a misdemeanour; but he wrote a poem excusing himself, and the police did not prosecute.¹⁶ And there was the mysterious action painter Mr. Ku, a contemporary of Chang Tsao, who travelled between the mansions of the aristocracy performing the extraordinary antics described in Chapter V. We would search the records of the seventh century in vain for painters of this sort.

The ninth-century records are very incomplete. Chu Ching-hsüan and Chang Yen-yüan write about the past rather than about their contemporaries, of whom they had on the whole a low opinion. We hear very little of court art and court painters. Now senior posts at court were once again dominated by the old aristocratic families, with the ever-present eunuchs in power, while the literati were becoming mere impotent spectators of the slow breakup of the dynasty. The life of the scholar official became more and more hazardous, and we have an impression of increasing restlessness and mobility, particularly after mid-century. Artists and writers were leaving Ch'ang-an, or not finding it necessary or prudent to go there at all, some making the long journey to Chengtu, presumably in search of security or patronage. The last decades of the ninth century saw a complete breakdown of the social order. Only in Chengtu, capital of Wang Chien's kingdom of Shu (903-925) were T'ang institutions preserved, and there, for a short time, court painters and scholarly amateurs flourished as once they had at Ch'ang-an.

T'ang Aesthetics

The T'ang was not, by comparison with the Six Dynasties and the Sung, a time of profound metaphysical or psychological awakening, or of major developments in philosophy. The achievement of the poets and theorists of the Three Kingdoms and Six Dynasties had left a legacy so rich, so subtle, and moreover couched in such general and all-embracing terms, that there was little fundamental that had not been said on the subject of the creative impulse by the time the T'ang Dynasty was well established. In aesthetics at least, if not in the technique of painting itself—where the T'ang developments were of momentous importance—the years between A.D. 600 and 900 appear to have been a time of harvest rather than of sowing. But this impression may be partly based on the fact that there survives from the first half of the T'ang Dynasty no art literature comparable to the writings of the Six Dynasties. Fragments of the writings of early T'ang critics are preserved in the *Li-tai ming-hua chi*.¹ Chang Yen-yüan in his discussion of painters not infrequently quotes the comments of a monk named Yen-tsung, writing about 635. A book attributed to him, consisting of a preface and brief evaluations of twenty-six painters, was later published under the title *Hou-hua lu* (Record of Later Painters); but opinion is divided as to whether the *Hou-hua lu* is what remains of a complete but now lost text, or whether it is simply a compilation from quotations preserved in the *Ming-hua chi*. From these fragments the author emerges as an enthusiast and a literary stylist, but he gives little solid information, and Chang Yen-yüan thought his comments unreliable.

The *Chen-kuan kung-ssu hua-lu* (Record of Paintings in the Imperial and Private Collections in the Chen-kuan era) by P'ei Hsiao-jan (preface 639) is a catalogue of two hundred ninety-three paintings by fifty-three artists from Chin to T'ang, chiefly in the Sui imperial collection: twelve are anonymous. While the author's comments are very brief, what makes this book a landmark in Chinese connoisseurship is his grouping of paintings into those that he considers

genuine and those he considers false, in spite of their traditional attributions, although unfortunately he does not give the reasons for his judgements.² Chang Yen-yüan also quotes from two other seventh-century works, by Li Su-chen and T'ou Meng, but says that they too are unreliable and "empty of meaning."

By the eighth century landscape painting had attained a new level of sophistication, but no contemporary text on aesthetics survives to bear witness to this fact. The scholar Chang Huai-kuan, appointed to the Han-lin Academy in the K'ai-yüan period (713-741), was the author of two works, the *Hua-man* (Opinions [or Judgements] on Painting), and the *Shu-man* (Opinions on Calligraphy). The former, also called the *Hua-p'ui-man*, is unfortunately lost, although it is quoted by Chang Yen-yüan. However, the introduction to the *Shu-tuan*, which is preserved intact in Chang Yen-yüan's anthology on calligraphy, *Fa-shu yao-lu*, contains a passage which applies as much to painting as to calligraphy, and is worth quoting at some length:

The myriad things all begin from the hidden and the minute and so become manifest and evident. The way in which the *Tao* arises and manifests itself is that it naturally establishes correspondences. Both the Former Sages and the Latter Sages went by this rule, and accorded with this compass.

Even in nearly a myriad years this ultimate principle will still hold good. For (all things) appear out of necessity, how should it be a matter of reasoning upon the relationship of A to B?

According to the traditions of the Taoists there exist writings by the Heavenly Sovereigns, the Earthly Sovereigns, and the Human Sovereigns, each (consisting of) several hundred words. The characters (of these writings) still consist of shapes (*hsiang*) like those used on tallies and seals, and their sound and meaning have not been transmitted. On the other hand the different pronunciations of *jung* and *ti* barbarians are all far apart, yet when brought together under written characters, the meanings are not different. And the feelings of birds and animals all correspond in the same manner. When one observes that their dispositions and tendencies are not far from those of man, then one realizes (how it comes) that the general run of the common people, making use of such things as the (different) kinds of grasses and trees, birds and beasts, may sometimes accumulate a store of signs and symbols (*wen chang*). Or again under (places where) bolts of lightning (have struck) there will be characters at times, or also on the auspicious engraved inscriptions. When investigated with the aid of the ancient script all such writings can be deciphered. And how could (such things as) these (characters) ever have been learned from men?³

Chang Huai-kuan's belief that men derive their symbols (*wen chang*) from natural markings, and that these are bestowed by heaven, has its origins in the concept of the *hsiang*, images or emblems, from which, according to the *I-ching* (Book of Changes) the eight trigrams are derived, a view that I discussed at some length in the first chapter of my earlier book *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China*. The Chinese have always held that the painted image and the written character are complementary manifestations of the heaven-given signs, and what Chang Huai-kuan says here about written forms could as easily apply to painted ones. So we may assume that similar ideas were expressed in the *Hua-man*. As we shall see, Chang Yen-yüan draws heavily on this in the first chapter of the *Li-tai ming-hua chi*.

Another lost work of the eighth century is the *Hui-ching* (Realm of Painting) by the landscapist Chang Tsao (see pages 65-69). All we know about this work is that Chang Yen-yüan mentions that Chang Tsao was the author and notes that in it Chang Tsao "discusses some important secrets of painting. However," he goes on, "the text is long so I do not include it here."⁴ Considering that Chang Tsao was possibly the most gifted, and certainly the most admired, landscape painter of the T'ang Dynasty, Chang Yen-yüan's failure even to quote from his book is deplorable. The painter had been a friend and protégé of Chang Yen-yüan's grandfather, and it is likely that there was a manuscript copy of the book in the historian's library. It was evidently not widely circulated, however: no T'ang writer except Chang Yen-yüan so much as mentions it, although Chu Ching-hsüan does refer to Chang Tsao as "a gentleman and a writer."

Chang Yen-yüan, in the opening paragraphs of the *Ming-hua chi*, establishes the credentials of painting in a number of different ways. When he begins by saying that it is "a thing which perfects the civilised teachings of the Sages and helps to maintain the social relationships" he is expressing an orthodox Confucian view, reinforced in his statement that "pictures and paintings are the great treasures symbolising Empire; they are the strands and leading ropes that can regulate disorders." Here he is presumably referring not only to portraits and didactic paintings, but also to pictorial maps and charts. But when he immediately goes on to declare, "it penetrates completely the divine permutations of Nature and fathoms recondite and subtle things . . . It proceeds from Nature itself and not from human invention," he is taking a Taoist, metaphysical stand. In Chinese thinking these views are not mutually exclusive, but are complementary, and in fact interact.

When Chang Yen-yüan then goes on to relate how in remote times the signs (*hsiang*) were discovered in the eight trigrams, and tells how four-eyed Chieh "mated the footprints of birds and tortoises, and at last determined the forms of the first characters," he is following in the footsteps of Chang Huai-kuan, who in turn must have been greatly influenced by the ideas about the power of patterns (*wen*) expressed by Liu Hsieh (465-522) in the first chapter of his great work on literary theory and criticism, *Wen-hsin tiao-lung* (Dragon-Carvings of a Literary Mind). "The sun and moon," wrote Liu Hsieh, "like two pieces of jade manifest the pattern of heaven; mountains and rivers in their display the pattern of earth. These are, in fact, the *wen* of *Tao* itself."⁵ The forms, alike of writing and of picture-making, were simply *there*, waiting for man to discover them, give them significance, and make use of them. "At that time," Chang says, "writing and painting were still alike in form, and had not yet been differentiated: standards for the formation (of the picture writing) had just been created and were still incomplete. It still had nothing whereby its meaning could be handed on, hence writing proper came into being."⁶ Thus, always at the back of the painter's mind was the idea that the forms he painted were not created by him; they were discovered, revealed.

The belief expressed or implied in these passages that the forms the artist paints are one way in which the *Tao* is made manifest, just as the forms of visible nature are another, accounts for the special correspondence that exists between painted forms and forms in nature. This gives the artist

a quasi-divine role, not as the creator of the forms he puts onto paper or silk—they are, as Chang says, “from Heaven”—but almost seeming as if he *had* created them. That is why the highest level of artistic production is called *shen*, divine, for it is indeed “god-like.” This emphasis upon the divine origin of the visible forms may go far towards explaining the little value put upon originality in Chinese painting; for how can mere man originate anything? All he can do is to fulfil his role as the agent through which form is set down on silk or paper and its significance expressed through style and brushwork. When the T’ang writers, wishing to praise an artist, say that his work is “deeply imbued with thought (*ssu*)” it is presumably this power to endow form with philosophical meaning that they have in mind.

Chang Yen-yüan devotes a whole section of his first chapter to the Six Principles of Hsieh Ho. His one comment on the first principle, *ch’i-yün sheng-tung* (spirit resonance and life movement), is brief and curious. “In modern paintings,” he writes, “even if by chance they achieve formal resemblance, a spirit-resonance does not arise. If they had but used spirit resonance in their pursuit of painting, then formal resemblance would have been immanent in their work.”⁷ Acker’s “immanent” is perhaps an excessively metaphysical reading of the passage. What Chang simply seems to be saying is that if the work of the moderns contained *ch’i-yün* it would be closer to nature.

Chang says that painters of “antiquity” were sometimes able to transmit likeness to the object and at the same time to stress its bone-energy, *ku-ch’i*. He characterises the art of “high antiquity”—the age of Ku K’ai-chih and Lu T’an-wei—as simple and of a “classic orthodoxy.” The painting of antiquity—the late sixth century, Chan Tzu-ch’ien and Cheng Fa-shih, for example (his sense of period is discussed further below)—he describes as “delicate and precise, refined and closely-knit, and exceedingly charming.” That of “recent times”—the age of Wang Wei, Chang Tso, and Wu Tao-tzu—he calls “gorgeous and brilliant, and aimed at perfection.” But the painting of his own day he dismisses as “confused and messy and altogether meaningless.” He then proceeds to discuss the way in which the remaining four principles of Hsieh Ho have been manifest up to his time, and claims that only his idol Wu Tao-tzu embraced them all. He refers again to the first principle in discussing the sixth, “the transmission of patterns,” stating that modern painters, “though they do achieve formal likeness (presumably to the model they are transmitting), yet they are without *ch’i-yün*.” In other words, they do not really transmit the old masters because they are transmitting only the form and not the spirit. Here he seems to be suggesting that the transmission of the spirit of the master is more important than the transmission of the form, thus he seems to be anticipating by nearly eight centuries the Ming critic Tung Ch’i-ch’ang’s insistence that the painter working in the manner of an old master only succeeds in keeping the tradition alive if he revitalises it by what he himself brings to his own version.⁸ I do not think this is reading too much into Chang Yen-yüan’s statement, for the only way in which *ch’i-yün* can be expressed is in the vitality of the brushstroke, and to the extent that the work is imbued with this quality it cannot be a faithful copy.

Chang Yen-yüan comes nearest to enunciating his own aesthetic philosophy in Chapter 2, part 2, "On the Brushwork of Ku (K'ai-chih), Lu (T'an-wei), Chang (Seng-yu) and Wu (Tao-tzu)." He begins by characterising the style of Ku K'ai-chih, "whose conception was kept whole (in his mind) before he used the brush, so that when the painting was all finished the conception was (embodied) in it, and therefore it was all divine breath (*shen-ch'i*)."⁹ He proceeds immediately to a discussion of the draft script (*ts'ao shu*), describing thus the Han calligrapher Chang Chih:

He would complete (characters) with a single stroke, and the vein of nervous energy continued through (the whole text) so uninterruptedly that it is not even broken between one column of characters and the next. Only Wang Tze-ching understood its deeper principles, and as a result the character at the top of a line is occasionally connected with the (character at the bottom of the) line before. This was popularly known as one stroke writing. Later Lu T'an-wei started one stroke painting as well, (in which the stroke) continued uninterruptedly. Thus we may know that the brush is used in the same way in both calligraphy and painting.

This is one of the clearest expressions of the aesthetic and technical union of writing and painting in early Chinese art literature. The concept of "one stroke" writing and painting, whereby the work is completed without any break in the flow of ideas and feeling, became a cornerstone of Chinese aesthetics, that was to achieve its most subtle and far-reaching expression in the seventeenth-century individualist Shih-t'ao's essay *Hua yü lu*. An imaginary questioner asks Chang Yen-yüan how Wu Tao-tzu could represent his forms so true to nature without the use of a ruler, and his answer carries us to the heart of the matter:

I answered him and said: "By keeping watch upon the spirit, and devoting himself wholly to oneness. (Thus the spirit) was in harmony with the work of Creation itself, and was free to borrow Master Wu's brush. This is what has been expressed before in the words 'when a thought is kept (in Mind) before the brush (is used), when the painting is finished the thought will remain.' But is it not thus with all things when they reach the height of excellence, for why should it be true of painting alone? (Remember) the carver Ting and (his knife which always looked as though it were) fresh from the mould, and the carpenter of Ying's (wonderfully skilful) wielding of the axe. But she who imitated the (famous beauty's) frown beat her breast in vain, and one who should try to chop in the place (of the carpenter of Ying) would only cut his own hand.

"As soon as one's purpose has become confused, it is in a state of bondage to outside things, for how should one be able to draw a circle with the left hand while making a square with the right.

"Now if one makes use of line-brush and ruler, the result will be dead painting. But if one guards the spirit and devotes oneself solely to oneness (with it), this will be true painting. Rather than a wall covered with dead paintings, better plain plaster, but even in one stroke of real painting one can see the breath of life.

"Now if one revolves one's thoughts and wields one's brush consciously thinking of oneself as painting, then (the more one tries) the less success one will have in painting. But if one revolves one's thoughts and wields one's brush without being conscious of (the act of) painting, then as a result one will have success in painting. When the hand does not stiffen, the mind does not freeze up, and (the

painting) becomes what it becomes without one's realizing how it becomes so, though one may bend bows, brandish blades, plant pillars, and place beams, how can line-brush and ruler come in among them?"¹⁰

This last paragraph strikingly echoes the view of the creative act expressed in a now famous statement made by the abstract expressionist Jackson Pollock in 1947:

When I am *in* my painting, I'm not aware of what I'm doing. It is only after a sort of "get-acquainted" period that I see what I have been about. I have no fears about making changes, destroying the image, etc., because the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through. It is only when I lose contact with the painting that the result is a mess. Otherwise there is pure harmony, an easy give and take, and the painting comes out well.¹¹

By contrast with Chang Yen-yüan, Chu Ching-hsüan is more old-fashioned in his ideas and more reticent in expressing them. Men of old, he says in the brief preface to the *Ming-hua lu*, called a painter a sage (*sheng*), "doubtless because he searches out the inaccessible in Heaven and Earth and illumines things upon which the sun and moon do not shine"¹²—a sentence that may mean as much or as little as one likes. He expresses the old wonder at the painter's power to compress a landscape into a silk scroll: "While he displays his talents within a square inch, a thousand *li* lie within his grasp"; and he deals with the distinction, stressed in the fifth century by the poet-painter Wang Wei, between outer form and inner essence in a somewhat cryptic fashion: "As for the problem of conveying the spiritual while determining the material, (the painter's) light ink in falling upon the white silk at once establishes that which has form and generates that which is formless."

Chu Ching-hsüan is old-fashioned also in grading his ninety-seven painters into three classes, reserving the top grade of the first class for Wu Tao-tzu alone. But he makes a new departure, at least so far as extant texts on Chinese painting are concerned, in establishing a separate category, the *i-p'in*, the "unconfined" or "untrammelled" class, for three painters who in his opinion did not conform to the accepted rules and consequently could not be judged by them—Wang Mo, Li Ling-sheng, and Chang Chih-ho. Wang Mo was what we would call an action painter, Li Ling-sheng's work "had a flavour all its own," and that of Chang Chih-ho became "a standard of elegance for its period," although another source says that when drunk he would paint facing in one direction while wielding his brush in another, a procedure which scarcely suggests elegance.

It is not altogether clear that when Chu Ching-hsüan uses the word *i* he always has in mind some extraordinary technique, however. The early T'ang critic Li Su-ch'en had created the *i* category in three works dealing with poetry, painting, and calligraphy, of which only the last survives. In this, the *Shu hou-p'in* (Later Classification of Calligraphers), he places in the *i-p'in* five calligraphers including Wang Hsi-chih and Wang Hsien-chih, whose style was superlative, but in no way eccentric.¹³ Chang Tsao's method of painting was strange enough (see Chapter V), yet Chu Ching-hsüan does not call it *i*. Of Wu Tao-tzu's painting he writes, "What is incomparable is his brushwork, which is always profusely varied and full of untrammelled movement (*i-shih*),"

but he does not place him in his *i-p'in*; nor does he Wei Yen, although he speaks of Wei's "lofty ideas and untrammelled style (*ko-i*);" nor does he Ch'en T'an, whom he puts next after Chang Tsao in his "rough independence (*yeh-i*) and the loftiness of his emotions." But we should not credit Chu Ching-hsüan with enunciating a clear-cut aesthetic philosophy and then accuse him of being inconsistent. He was a poet after all. Perhaps he placed these three artists in his *i-p'in* because he did not know where else to put them: they were, one might say, *hors concours*. Certainly no judgement of quality is implied in his use of the term.

Apart from the somewhat eclectic philosophy inferred from the *Li-tai ming-hua chi*, there is no surviving document on T'ang painting that probes very deeply into the mysteries of artistic creation. But there is one remarkable work on poetry which could, by extension, be applied to painting. This is the *Erh-shih-szu shih-p'in*, Twenty-four Poetic Qualities, of Ssu-k'ung T'u (837-908).¹⁴ Ssu-k'ung T'u's work, like Shih-t'ao's *Hua yü lu* eight centuries later (which may have been partly inspired by it), is steeped in Taoist metaphysics and like all Taoist texts is very obscure; but reading it even in free translation gives a hint of horizons of aesthetic feeling and expression that lie beyond what can be expressed in words.

A number of attempts have been made to translate this elusive work, which, as Pauline Yu puts it,

contains recurring themes which are presented with sometimes imperceptibly different emphases, so that only the whole, and not necessarily each individual poem, fulfills the aesthetic function of embodiment. Only a few of the poems actually manifest their principles totally and implicitly; others disintegrate into intractable insights. Many of them seem indistinguishable from one another, and the vague meaning of *p'in* may have something to do with this.¹⁵

Basically, the *Shih-p'in* deals with the poet's ecstatic, intuitive communion with nature, the source of his inspiration, and with the spontaneous expression of his awareness through art. This process Ssu-k'ung T'u describes or evokes in a number of ways, as for example in the poem on spontaneity, "Tzu-jan," in which the "hand's touch" in the fourth line refers to the poet's art:

Stoop to get it, there it is;
Don't go seeking it everywhere
Move along with the whole Tao
And a hand's touch creates spring.
Like encountering a flower's bloom,
Like gazing at the year's renewal;
What's truly got can't be taken away . . .¹⁶
Force it and it's easily exhausted.
A hermit on an empty mountain
Crosses the water to pick duckweed.
He naturally understands
The vast and distant heavenly cycle.

This is pure Taoism, yet at the same time it is a clear expression of the creative process.

Any interpretation of the message of the *Shih-p'in* must be somewhat subjective, expressed as it often is in such cryptic utterances as this in the first poem, "Grandeur" (Hsiung-hun):

Leap beyond the external appearance [*hsiang wai*]
To reach the circle's centre.¹⁷

Or, as Günther Debon puts it, rather more prosaically, "Transcending beyond the images he (it) reaches the center of the circle [where no antinomies exist]."¹⁸ "Beyond the images," *hsiang wai*, is a term that occurs elsewhere in the critical literature of the T'ang. The concept itself is far older. "The greatest image," says the *Tao-te ching*, "has no form," or, as Waley translates it, "The great Form is without shape."¹⁹ It occurs in a *fu* (rhapsodic prose-poem) by the fourth-century poet Sun Ch'o, whose thought was a blend of Buddhist and Taoist ideas. In his *Roaming in the T'ien-t'ai Mountains* he writes:

[The Immortals] explain the theory [of things] beyond images [to me],
And elucidate the [Buddhist] doctrine of being without birth [or death].²⁰

Burton Watson in his translation of this *fu* thinks the term *hsiang wai* refers to Taoism itself.

The earliest occurrence of the term that I have come across in regard to painting is Chu Ching-hsüan's remark about Wang Tsai: "His mountains and water, his trees and rocks, emerge 'beyond image.'" Su Tung-p'o said much the same of Wang Wei.²¹ Chang Yen-yüan wrote that this idea was already being striven for, with their inadequate means, by the painters of antiquity, who "sought (to extend) their paintings beyond (mere) formal likeness [*hsing ssu chih nai*], striving after *ch'i-yüan*."²² But *hsiang-wai* means more than transcending formal likeness. In his letter to Chi-p'u, Su-k'ung T'u quotes Tai Shu-lun: "The scenery of the poet resembles the Field of Indigo, when sun is burning and from the precious stones smoke is rising: you can observe it from afar, but you cannot put it before your eyes." And he comments, "The image beyond image, the scenery beyond scenery, how can we easily chat about it?"²³

Su-k'ung T'u's celebration of the poet's power to go beyond the words to the Tao itself has no sustained parallel in the surviving literature of T'ang landscape painting. Yet there are hints of it even in Chang Yen-yüan, and it would be surprising if some painters, in the ninth century at least, were not thinking along the same lines. For painting, except that of the artisans and professionals, was not a separate activity, independent of literature, poetry, or social ethics. It was but one of several ways in which the cultivated man conducted and expressed himself. For us in the West, as Belpaire notes in his preface to Su-k'ung T'u's *Twenty-four Poetic Qualities*, art and morality are two different things (Ruskin was an obvious exception); but for the Chinese author the Tao of which he speaks appears to be expressed at the same time in art, in philosophy, and in religion. What Belpaire says of the role of poetry in T'ang culture could be applied equally to the painting of such men as Wang Wei, Cheng Ch'ien, or Hsiao Yüeh:

L'époque des T'ang en Chine elle aussi fut une époque de splendeur et l'intense activité littéraire de ses écrivains a sans doute produit plus d'une poétique, le tour philosophique de la pensée chinoise,

l'habitude d'enfermer ses dits dans des adages, la part énorme donnée à la poésie dans l'enseignement, l'emploi des vers et de la prose rythmée pour les relations entre intellectuels, tout prédisposait le penseur chinois à ce travail de philosophie, de critique et de dilettantisme que l'on nomme un art poétique.²⁴

In T'ang criticism, not only are the ideas and images often interchangeable, but the literature of art and poetry share a number of terms in common. This is not of course peculiar to Chinese: witness words like "tone," "balance," "rhythm." But the Chinese critical vocabulary is large and imprecise, and perhaps for this reason has the capacity of moving easily from one area of critical judgement to another. Terms such as *ch'i* (air or breath), *shen* (spirit), and *ch'ing* (feeling, emotion) belong to all the arts. *Yiin* originally meant "rhyme," but when applied to painting it can mean the "resonance" of the work, suggesting a cosmic vibration to which the artist has attuned his own *yiin*, hence Soper's translation of the word as "consonance."

Many of the terms applied to poetry, to calligraphy, and finally to painting had been coined in the third and fourth centuries to characterise men. *Feng* (wind or air) is such a term; so are *feng-li* (forcefulness), *feng-shen* (literally, wind-spirit) and *shen-ch'i* (spirit-breath). Liu Hsieh devotes a whole section of the *Wen-hsin tiao-lung* to *feng-ku*, which he defines, for the poet, as being, in Vincent Shih's interpretation, "firm and exact in diction, and in resonance sure without being heavy."²⁵ The term *ku-ch'i* (bone-breath) carries the same connotation. *Feng-ku* (wind-bone) implies, in a general sense, the "noble temper" of the artist, in a special sense his artistic integrity or probity. Chang Huai-kuan used it in his discussion of calligraphy; Hsieh Ho applied it to the painting of Ts'ao Pu-hsing.

The term *tun-ts'o*, which Gunther Debon freely translates as "emphatic," and defines further as "an emphatic movement or stress" combined with "a sudden break of the movement (which is followed by a movement in another direction),"²⁶ had been used in the *Wen fu* by Lu Chi to describe the prose form of Admonitions; Tu Fu uses the term to describe the dancing of the famous Madame Kung-sun; Chang Huai-kuan applies it, very aptly, to calligraphy. Chang Yen-yüan, in his paraphrase of Hsieh Ho, uses it to characterise the work of the fifth-century painter Lu Sui: *feng-li tun-ts'o*, "the force of his personality was agitated"—suggesting a close connection between personal qualities and artistic style that was to become central to the philosophy of the painting of the literati.

The aesthetic ideas expressed in the latter half of the T'ang Dynasty by writers on art are for the most part those of scholars, referring to the painting of men of their own kind. Yet nowhere in T'ang art literature does the term *wen-jen hua*, or *shih-ta-fu hua*, literary men's, or scholar officials', painting, occur. It must be for this reason that the view is widely held that—apart from a nod in the direction of Wang Wei—the very concept of literary men's painting, and the *wen-jen hua* itself, was an invention of the Sung poet Su Tung-p'o (1037-1101) and his circle. In her important study of the subject Susan Bush, after mentioning Wang Wei and Chang Tsao, goes on:

However the subjects and the styles of most of the T'ang officials still paralleled those of the professional painters. Scholars' art theory appeared in Sung times and reflected a new type of painting, but one that was not defined in terms of style. Scholar-artists were now aware of their role as an elite group, and the art that they sponsored was closely associated with poetry and calligraphy. They shared the common concerns of a social class rather than of artistic aims. . .²⁷

I believe that this takes too narrow a view of T'ang painting, and that on the contrary there is, labels aside, ample evidence that the outlook and ideas of the *wen-jen hua*, and its intimate connection with poetry, calligraphy, and scholarship, were already well established before the end of the T'ang Dynasty.

Links between poetry and painting are of course far older than the T'ang. When fourth- and fifth-century painters illustrated the *Book of Songs* or the descriptive *fu* the connection was already there, but there was then no special relationship between the two arts. In the T'ang, they interact in a far more subtle way. Tu Fu writes a poem on the wall beside Wei Yen's painting, evoked by it, complementing it. Tu Fu, again, writes poems about the paintings of his friends; in fact the very existence of two T'ang landscape painters, Li Tsun-shih and Liu Tan, is known only through his poems about their work.²⁸ The fact that Tu Fu himself may not have been an infallible critic—referring to his poem in praise of Han Kan's horses, Chang Yen-yüan says that he understood nothing about painting—is immaterial; and perhaps Chang is being unduly pedantic here.²⁹ What is important is that Tu Fu was passionately interested in the painting of his scholar friends and found their art a fit subject, and an inspiration, for poetry. Being himself an artist, he understood the creative process; he is sometimes carried away with enthusiasm, as when he writes, "I should like to enjoy painting my whole life through, and especially to concentrate on Li Tsun-shih."

Tu Fu's poem "Recently Painted Landscape on a Screen by Sub-Prefect Liu [Tan] of Feng-hsien" is typical of the kind of verses in which the poet expressed his love of painting, especially landscape painting. He plunges at once into a description of the screen:

It is hard to bring oneself to accept that plane-trees are growing there, right in the hall.
And it is amazing to see these streams and mountains emerging out of cloudy vapours.
I have heard that at first you used to paint the scenery of your own district,
But now you like to paint interesting, imaginary landscapes.
Even though there are certainly countless master painters, a true artist like you
is seldom met with.
Before the painting, one's heart and spirit are set free, and we can see that you
have poured your feelings onto the silk.
Not only have you gone beyond Ch'i Yo and Cheng Ch'ien, but your brushwork
excels that of Yang Ch'i-tan.
If this picture does not present the rocky Hsüan-p'u (of the K'un-lun range),
is it perhaps the region of Hsiao and Hsiang?
I feel as if I were sitting at the foot of T'ien-men Mountain, and in my ears
there seems to echo the shrill cry of the monkeys . . .³⁰

Tu Fu's praise of the painter and his landscape becomes more and more extravagant. "The Honourable Liu," he goes on, "is full of the heaven-bestowed power of artistic composition, / And his love of the art has entered into the very marrow of his bones." The poet adds that Liu Tan has two boys who show some promise: the elder can already paint an old tree growing from the summit of a crag, while even in the younger the creative spirit is stirring, and he knows how to paint the figure of a mountain priest with a small boy. But we never hear of them again.

Another painter known only through a single poem is Fan Shan-jen, the subject of these lines written by the poet-painter Ku K'uang:

The Mountains are lofty and majestic, the water flows deep and clear;
Spreading and vast he plies his brush.
Suddenly it is as if in the air there were things,
And in the things there were sound.
Again, it is as if on a distant road a traveller were looking towards home;
In his dream he circles the mountains and streams,
But his body cannot follow . . .³¹

Having no idea what Fan Shan-jen's paintings looked like, we cannot tell whether poems of this sort were, like so much Chinese poetry, mere conventional praise, inspired by politeness or an obligation, or whether they were genuine expressions of admiration of something exceptional.

It is from a poem also that we learn all we know about Li Ssu-hsün's nephew Li Lin-fu as a landscape painter. Junior premier, president of the Board of Rites and, from 736, director of the Grand Imperial Secretariat, this powerful confidant of Ming-huang seems nevertheless to have had plenty of time for painting. Sun T'ü's poem may be conventional and sycophantic, but it gives an interesting glimpse of the great minister, always fearful of assassination, hoping, perhaps, that his frescoes will secure him a kind of immortality:

Since his palace duties leave many days of leisure
Landscapes have become his ruling passion.
Wishing to convey the sense of depth and height
He has turned to the making of richly embellished paintings.
The Nine Rivers loom above his doors and windows;
The Three Passes encircle his eaves and pillars.
His flowering willows bloom the whole year round;
His mists and clouds grow where he wishes.
He can bring a myriad *li* close to hand,
Without thought for the order of the seasons.
Life-energy imbues his yellow flowers with perfume;
Sunlight adds to the purity of his pleasure-spots.
His verses set mountain sites in order;
His paintings reveal the vastness of space.
He is guarding himself against the accidents of a thousand years,
Not to mention those of his eight years of fame.³²

In addition to T'ang poems that can be connected to known artists (a number of which are quoted in a later section of this book), there are others inspired by the works of unknown painters which help to fill out our picture of T'ang landscape painting, and of the way in which it was regarded by the literati. Po Chü-i, for example, wrote a poem in 809 describing a seascape on a screen by an unknown artist.³³ Tu Fu wrote a poem on what seems to have been a panorama or pictorial map of the road from Shu to Ch'ang-an as a farewell to his friend and patron Yen Wu, duke of Cheng-kuo and governor of Szechwan from 762, when Yen set off to the capital for consultations.³⁴ Such poems were often written as an act of courtesy to a superior, but they are informative none the less. Such also is Tu Fu's "Respectfully Gazing upon the Painting of the Min Mountains and T'o River in the Hall of Governor Yen Wu, Duke of Cheng-kuo":

The T'o River flows across the middle (of the hall), the Min Mountains stretch to the north.
Foaming waves spatter the wall with white; green mountain peaks reach up to the carved rafters.
How amazingly cool the pinetrees seem! One can almost smell the scent of the water-chestnuts.
The snow-clouds are rendered as if they were dissolving; the grasses on the sandy shore seem specks in the distance.
A wild goose flying over the mountains tops is but a stroke of the brush; a rainbow plunges into a river shimmering like silk.
A hazy red on an island suggests a riot of flowers; a stroke of dark green, long creepers trailing from the rocks.
The valley lies in darkness—but not because of the rain; the maples are red—but not because of the autumn frost: for this is a painting, not the real thing.
The autumn city is like the dwelling of an immortal; the scenery like that around Lake Tung-t'ing.
The skill of this painting is extraordinary, stirring my heart to a pitch of excitement.
Long ago Hsich An truly said: "The mountains and valleys once seen are never forgotten."³⁵

Han Yü's poem on a painting of the *Peach Blossom Spring* is rather conventional in its praise, but reveals the poet's disarming, and characteristic, scepticism about the authenticity of the story:

Whether there really are spirits and immortals who can say?
The tale of the Peach Blossom Spring is truly absurd.
The flowing water has countless turns, the mountain a hundred twists.
Several scrolls of fresh silk hang in the central hall.
The Prefect of Wu-ling is a man of many interests;
He inscribed and sealed the scrolls and sent them to a friend in the Ministry of Ceremonies.
Mr. Ceremonies received them with delight;
Waves of inspiration surged through his brush, and the words gushed forth.
The skill of the verse and the marvels of the painting alike reach the heights of excellence . . .³⁶

There follows Han Yü's retelling of the familiar story, and he ends:

He pushes off his boat, his oar cuts the water, while he turns his head once more to gaze
 On ten thousand *li* of azure sky, mist, water, darkness.
 How could the common people know what is true or false?
 So they still hand down the tale of the man of Wu-ling.

Landscape paintings were sometimes as powerfully evocative to poets as the scene itself. The late T'ang poet Wei Chuang's lines on "A Picture of Chin-ling" reminded him of the devastation that city had suffered:

Who says that it is impossible to paint the state of being heartbroken?
 This painter's heart has captured the feeling of all the people of the world.
 When you look at the views of the Southern Dynasties,
 Ancient trees and wintry clouds fill the old city.³⁷

Another of his Nanking landscape poems is, like the poetry of Wang Wei, vividly pictorial in its feeling:

Though a shower bends the river-grass, a bird is singing,
 While ghosts of the Six Dynasties pass like a dream
 Around the Forbidden City, under weeping willows
 Which loom still for three miles along the misty moat.³⁸

Chang Chi (765-830) wrote a poem inspired by a painting of the towers of Hangchow;³⁹ Yüan Chieh (723-772) wrote a description of a painting of the Chiu-i shan, a range of nine peaks in Hunan so alike that they are often confused with one another.⁴⁰ Li Shang-yin (812?-858) set down a vivid account of a painting of pine trees given him by Li Hung, a friend who had come in first in the literary examinations of 837, which the poet had also passed. These lines strongly suggest the kind of painting for which Chang Tsao had been famous, and one would give much to know who the painter was:

The ten thousand grasses are already cool with dew.
 As I open the scroll and unfold the ancient pines,
 Among blue mountains that stretch by the vast sea,
 On which peak are these trees growing?
 Their solitary roots spread far, relying on nothing;
 They stand straight, pillaring the primeval air of nature:
 Upright as the persons of true gentlemen,
 Erect as brave knights with chests thrust forward.
 Their low-bending branches twist powerfully,
 Suddenly twisting upwards as if to reach the sky.
 Again, they are like dragons running in surprise,
 Silently encountering rushing clouds.
 Their offshoots give forth tiny leaves
 As soft as a fine fox fur coat,
 Or the thick tufts of hair on top of a child's head,
 Or the dense, dark eyebrows of a beautiful lady.⁴¹

Some late T'ang poetry, though ostensibly inspired by pictures, goes in its extravagant imagery far beyond anything that could be depicted in a landscape painting. One of Li Ho's four poems, "After Looking at a Painting of the Ching-t'an Park," contains the lines:

Baboons screaming deep in the bamboo,
Night herons standing venerably on wet sand . . .⁴²

Even more difficult to render pictorially are his vivid lines inspired by a painting on the walls of Yung-tung which I have quoted above.

The rationale of the scholar painter's approach to his art is hinted at by Chu Ching-hsüan, himself a poet, when in the preface to the *Ming-hua lu* he calls the painter a sage. Chang Yen-yüan writes that "those who are not highly cultivated cannot talk about painting." The idea that understanding was got by intense study was of course peculiar to the literati. It is well expressed in these oft-quoted lines of Tu Fu:

Reading books I have worn out ten thousand volumes
Whenever I put pen to paper, the divine is present.⁴³

No T'ang painter ever said quite that, but it is certainly implied in Chang Yen-yüan's view that only the scholar can reach the highest levels in art.

We might ask why the reading of ten thousand books should be an aid to the creative artist when the T'ang theorists at the same time emphasise the innate, heaven-bestowed nature of his revelation, for "painting," declared Chang Yen-yüan, "proceeds from Heaven itself and not from human invention." But this is not as inconsistent as it may appear. There is a clear distinction between the source of the artist's inspiration (and even of the forms he paints), which is indeed divine, and the particular character and flavour he bestows upon them. That is an aspect of his cultivation as a scholar and a gentleman in the best Confucian sense—of his *Bildung*.

The view that the *wen-jen hua* is an innovation of the Northern Sung period is partly supported by the fact that its philosophy was not clearly articulated until the eleventh century. Nevertheless, from the eighth century onwards there were painters who were recluses (for example Lu Hung, Wu T'ien, Chang Chih-ho in later life); who were morally and intellectually incorruptible (Lu Hung, Cheng Ch'ien, Wang Wei, Yang Yen); who were officials, from the highest (P'ei Hsü) to most humble (Chang Tsao), and painted entirely, or almost entirely, for their own and one another's pleasure in their leisure time; who eschewed the use of colour, relying on monochrome ink alone (Wang Wei, Chang Tsao); who made bamboo their special province (Hsiao Yüeh); who united the three arts of poetry, calligraphy and painting, writing poems on and about their own and one another's paintings, consorting chiefly with poets and scholars (Cheng Ch'ien, Wang Wei, Chang Tsao, Wei Yen); who believed that painting reflected the character of the painter as much as of nature itself (Chang Yen-yüan's remark about Yang Yen); and who believed that for painting deep knowledge and wide reading were essential (Chang Yen-yüan).

The style of Wang Wei is described by Chang Yen-yüan as "too blunt and awkward"—a defect that from Sung times onwards was elevated to the status of a cardinal virtue in the painting of the literati. Elsewhere Chang speaks of the "gravity and depth" of Wang Wei's landscapes. Of some screen-paintings by Chang Tsao, Chang Yen-yüan says they reveal that his processes of thought were full; of the work of P'ei Hsü that it was "deeply imbued with thought." Yüan Chen's poem on Chang Tsao's painting of pine trees stresses the lofty purity of thought of this master:

Now I realise that it is hard for people with dusty minds
To depict the essence of clouds and mist—

and Fu Tsai's short essay on Chang Tsao (quoted in Chapter V) paints a picture of a gentleman whose spirit remains unsullied and independent amid the corruption and intrigue of an official career. One gains the impression that these men, painters, poets, and critics alike, clearly looked on their activity as painters in quite a different way from that in which, say, Yen Li-pen, Li Ssu-hsün, or Wu Tao-tzu would have regarded it.

The modern critic T'eng Ku wrote that there were three essential features of the *wen-jen hua*: it was the work of artists who were scholar officials as distinct from artisan painters; it was an expressive outlet for scholars in their spare time; and the style itself was different from that of the academicians.⁴⁴ If we accept this as the considered view of a Chinese historian, then all the essential features of the *wen-jen hua* were present in the T'ang Dynasty. Even the view expressed elsewhere in the same treatise by T'eng Ku that "the expressive content of a picture may be partially or wholly independent of its representational content" is implicit in the extremely expressionistic methods of the T'ang individualists and eccentrics from Chang Tsao onwards.

What distinguishes T'ang from Sung is that Su Tung-p'o and his circle gathered these beliefs, attitudes, and practises into a coherent philosophy, and gave it a name. Moreover, they laid far greater stress upon the idea, little hinted at in the T'ang, that the scholar painter was of a higher order of being than other painters, for he did not allow his thoughts or ideas (*i*) to "rest" in things—that is, he did not commit himself to what Cézanne called his "little sensation"—but stood back from it, preserving his detachment. This detachment, of which we find no evidence in T'ang painting, bred a form of intellectual and social snobbery that in the long run had a profound effect on the style of painting that the scholars thought suitable for them to practise.

The North-South Dialectic in Chinese Culture and Painting

One of the most widely accepted traditions in Chinese art history is that two schools of landscape painting, the Northern and the Southern, originated in the T'ang Dynasty. Because this doctrine, put forward by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636) for largely ideological reasons, throws more light on the moral and intellectual crisis of the late Ming period than it does on the history of early Chinese landscape painting, we could dismiss it as unhelpful if not positively misleading. Yet if we do so, we are in danger of losing sight altogether of the somewhat elusive reality that lies behind it, obscured by the late Ming critic's peculiar bias and special pleading. It may be useful briefly to state the doctrine, and take note of what some writers have said about it. The source quoted most often is this passage from Mo Shih-lung's *Hua shuo*, an unreliable work in which the crucial passages are copied from earlier writings of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang:

In Ch'an Buddhism there is a Southern and Northern School, which first separated in the T'ang period; in painting a similar division into a Southern and Northern School was brought about in about the same period. But the men [who represented these schools] did not come from the South and North [respectively]. The Northern School took its origin from Li Ssu-hsün, father and son, who used colours in their landscapes; their manner was transmitted in the Sung period by Chao Kan, Chao Po-chü, Chao Po-su down to Ma Yüan, Hsia Kuei and others. The Southern School started with Mo-ch'i [Wang Wei], who used light washes of ink instead of fine lines (hookings and cuttings), and this was continued by Chang Tsao, Kuan T'ung, Tung Yüan, Chü-jan, Kuo Chung-shu and the two Mi, father and son, down to the four great masters of the Yüan period. It was just as in Ch'an Buddhism.¹

One need hardly stress the enormous influence that this doctrine has had upon Chinese painters and critics up to the present day. It is repeated, for example, by Shen Hao (late Ming) in his *Hua-chü*,² and by Chang Keng in the introduction to his *Hua-hui* (about 1730), who adds

that "the schools are not named after localities."³ Wang Hui traces the history of the Southern School and deplores the intrusion and decay of more recent splinter groups.⁴ Shen Tsung-ch'ien (1781) accepts it, although he has some pertinent things to say about regional styles.⁵ Talking now to contemporary critics and painters, one finds that they generally take it on faith as one of the facts of their cultural history, and are quite sure in their minds which pictures belong in which school. It is a matter primarily of brushwork, none the less surely felt for its lack of precise definition.

The awareness on the part of Western historians of Chinese art that the doctrine is a late invention, at least partly inspired by motives that had more to do with politics than art, has caused it to be regarded with increasing scepticism. But even before Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's mixed motives were exposed,⁶ it was obvious that it did not accord with the historical facts. From the very little known about Wang Wei's style, it is clear that while he painted in monochrome ink wash he also had a coloured style,⁷ and there is no early evidence that he was a technical innovator. On the other hand, there were other T'ang painters, above all Chang Tsao,⁸ and those classed by Chu Ching-hsüan in the *i-p'in*, who were far more adventurous in their handling of brush and ink, and hence more significant than Wang Wei as precursors of the great masters of the tenth and eleventh centuries.⁹ None of these artists, except Chang Tsao, are mentioned by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang or later scholarly painters as founders of their school. The glory belongs to Wang Wei alone. Yet, if there was any stylistic polarisation of T'ang painters, it was between these innovators on the one hand and Li Ssu-hsün, Li Chao-rao, and their followers on the other, with Wang Wei possibly occupying a position somewhere in between.

This being the case, is there any sense at all in which it is permissible to speak of a Northern and a Southern School of landscape painting in the T'ang Dynasty? Even a cursory study of the careers of the more important artists suggests that there is. If, from the two main sources for the history of Sui and T'ang painting, the *T'ang-ch'ao ming-hua lu* and the *Li-tai ming-hua chi*, we pick out the landscape painters whom these writers considered most significant, arrange them as nearly as possible in chronological order, and place them in two columns according to where they worked and/or came from, we arrive at the following list.

Northerners, and painters of unknown origin who worked in the north

Southerners, and painters of unknown origin who worked in the south

SUI

Chan Tzu-ch'ien¹⁰

Cheng Fa-shih (Chang Seng-yu's best pupil, worked in north under Northern Chou and Sui)

FIRST HALF OF T'ANG

Tung Po-chen (native of Honan)

Fan Ch'ang-shou (northern cavalry officer at beginning of T'ang)

T'an Chih-min (follower of Tung Po-chen)

Wang T'o-tzu (?)¹¹
 Yen Li-pen and Yen Li-te (Shensi)¹²
 Wu Tao-tzu (Yang-ti, Honan)
 Yang T'ing-kuang (pupil of Wu Tao-tzu)¹³
 Li Ssu-hsün and Li Chao-tao¹⁴
 Yin Chung-jung (Honan)¹⁵
 Cheng Ch'ien (Chengchow)¹⁶
 Wang Wei (T'ai-yüan, Shansi)
 Chang Yin¹⁷
 Wang T'ai (uncertain: had post in Hunan;
 influenced by Li Ssu-hsün)¹⁸
 Chang Hsüan (Ch'ang-an)

Chang Chih-ho (Chin-hua, Chekiang)¹⁹

SECOND HALF OF T'ANG

Wei Yen (Ch'ang-an)²⁰

Han Huang (Ch'ang-an)²¹

Ch'ên T'an (?)²³

Chang Tsao (Wu-hsien, Chekiang)
 Liu Shang (friend and follower of Chang Tsao;
 later became a recluse at I-hsing)
 Tai Sung (served under Han Huang when he
 was governor of Chekiang)²²
 Chu Shen (Wu-hsing)
 Hsiao Yüeh (Hangchow)²⁴
 Yang Yen (Yang Kung-han)²⁵
 Hsiang Jung, Hsiang Chu, Hsiang Hsin (recluses
 in Kiangsi)²⁶
 Wang Mo (pupil of Hsiang Jung)²⁷
 Mr. Ku²⁸
 Li Ling-sheng²⁹
 Hsü Piao-jen³⁰
 Ch'eng Hsiu-chi (born and raised in Yüeh-
 chou, but also worked in Ch'ang-an)³¹
 Tao-fen

LAST DECADES OF T'ANG

SZECHWAN

Ch'ang Ts'an³⁵

T'iao Kung-yin (Ch'ang-an)³⁷

Sun Wei (native of Chekiang)³²
 Wang Ts'ai³³
 Chang Su-ch'ing³⁴
 Chang Hsün (native of Canton)³⁶

From this list two striking facts emerge. The first is that from the beginning of the T'ang Dynasty to the middle of the eighth century all the important landscape painters were either northerners or men of unknown origin who spent their working lives in the north; in the second half of the dynasty, with the exception of Yang Yen, Ch'ang Ts'an, and T'iao Kuang-yin, all

were southerners (and all but two were natives of the Chekiang-Kiangsu area) or artists of unknown origin who lived and worked in the lower Yangtze Valley. The role of Szechwan need not concern us here. The brief flowering of painting in Shu in the ninth and tenth century was indeed phenomenal, but so far as we know it had no established local tradition behind it, and it left no known legacy.

Surely, we must ask, there must have been talented southern painters in the first half of the dynasty? It seems inconceivable that the great tradition built up in Nanking from Ts'ao Pu-hsing and Ku K'ai-chih to Chang Seng-yu and Lu T'an-wei should have left no heirs, no important figure between 600 and 750. Yet no reliable early source on Chinese landscape painting mentions a single prominent southerner active during this period, either in the south or at the northern capitals. It might be thought that Chu Ching-hsüan and Chang Yen-yüan, writing in the mid-ninth century, did not have access to relevant records. Yet Chu himself was a native of Soochow. If there had been any prominent southern painters in the first half of the dynasty he could hardly have been ignorant of them, being as well-informed as he was about the northerners. Chang Yen-yüan was a member of a prominent northern family, but certainly spent some time in the south, for he mentions having seen wall-paintings by the monk Hsü Piao-jen in the southern hall of the commandery of Wu-hsing.³⁸ He knew from his own experience the landscape both of the Honan-Shensi-Shansi area and of Chekiang-Kiangsu. He had seen pictures by artists of both these regions and knew how different they were. "Some painters," he writes, speaking of the Six Dynasties,

lived their whole lives under a southern dynasty and never saw the men and things of the north. Some learned their art north of the pass and knew nothing about the mountains and streams of the Chiang-nan region; others lived in the Chiang-tung (between the rivers and the coast) and knew nothing of the capital at Loyang. That is why Li Su-chen in judging Tung (Po-jen) and Chan (Tzu-ch'ien) says, "the place where they lived was the level plain (*p'ing-yüan*) which lacks the beauties of the region South of the River, and their work has to do rather with war horses than with the ceremonial of hairpin and train"

—that is, than with the kind of court life that Ku K'ai-chih had depicted.³⁹

We know almost nothing about the northern landscape painters before the Sui reunification. Most of the late sixth-century northerners, such as Chan Tzu-ch'ien and Cheng Fa-shih, seem to have preferred to paint imaginary springtime excursions, in which the hills, if precipitous, were improbably so—like those in *Ming-huang's Journey*, which hardly gives a true idea of the grimness of northern ranges. If Chang Yen-yüan is to be believed, one of the first landscapists to do this convincingly was Wang T'o-tzu, a seventh-century northern master who was "extremely good at rendering the awesomeness of peaks and ranges . . . he had no equal in any age in representing the untrodden and inspiring."

By contrast, the lower Yangtze Valley was a land of lakes and rivers, of broad vistas, hospitable easy-contoured hills, where temples and cottages nestled in the tree-clad valleys, and one could wander in comfort. I have mentioned some of the T'ang painters nurtured in this

kinder environment. Their work was often characterised by a free experimental use of ink to achieve atmospheric depth and richness of texture. The crags of the northern mountains demanded to be "carved and hollowed out," as Chang Yen-yüan wrote of Yang Ch'i-tan, "like the axe-blade edges of melting ice." Those of the south, wooded and often wreathed in mist, could be more truly depicted in subtle gradations of ink tone. It was perhaps inevitable that in time the northern technique, based on line, gradually hardened to become that of professionals and court painters, while that of the south, allowing a more spontaneous expression of feeling through the free play of brush and ink, should have become the natural style for the gentleman and poet.

The breakthrough achieved by the T'ang landscape painters occurred in the realm of technique. It was their experiments in breaking the line, in the manipulation of ink wash and the creation of a vocabulary of texture strokes, that made possible the great achievements of the masters of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Who were the chief technical innovators? Any list would have to include the following:

FAN CH'ANG-SHOU (early seventh century), who according to Chang would "seize his brush with a sweep and bring it down on the paper as if it were flying." His origins are unknown. He worked in the north, but followed Chang Seng-yu—though the phrase *shih fa yü* is ambiguous: it can mean either "learned technique from" or "studied under." Hardly an innovator, perhaps, but he seems to have gone a significant step beyond Chang Seng-yu.

WEI YEN, who in painting mountains would "lay down his brush with a circular motion; for water he would rub with his hand."

CHANG TSAO, from all early accounts the greatest landscape painter of the T'ang Dynasty, a master of ink wash, who sometimes used worn brushes or the flat of his hand to spread the ink.

LIU SHANG, Chang Tsao's follower. Not much is known about his technique, except that the term *shui mo* (ink wash) occurs, possibly for the first time, in one of his poems.

CHANG CHIH-HO. A recluse in Wu-hsien; the "mist and waves fisherman." An action painter with brush and ink, classified by Chu Ching-hsüan in his *i-p'in* (untrammelled class).

HSIANG JUNG. Scholar in retirement on T'ien-t'ai in Chekiang. A "blunt and rough" painter, who "had ink but lacked brush."

WANG MO. "Wang the ink-flinger," an action painter who had begun by modelling himself on Hsiang Jung. *I-p'in*.

LI LING-SHENG. The third of Chu's *i-p'in* painters. Nothing is known about him except for Chu's description of his unconventional style of life and painting: his trees and bamboo were indicated "with a dot and a dash." He seems to have been a precursor of Tung Yüan, and was almost certainly a southerner.

KU K'UANG, native of Wu-hsing. Possibly the Mr. Ku who was a follower of Wang Mo, and poured his ink on strips of silk laid on the floor, then turned his smears into landscapes.

HSÜ PIAO-JEN. His technique included "single and double strokes and curved and broken lines." A technical mannerist, perhaps an experimentalist.

SUN WEI. "His brush strength had a wild strangeness; his successes did not lie in his handling of colours." Classified in *I-chou ming-hua lu* as *i-p'in*.

A glance at this list reveals a second striking fact about T'ang landscape painting: namely that apart from the first two, and Fan Ch'ang-shou barely merits inclusion, all these innovators and eccentrics appear to have been southerners. This requires some explanation. The most obvious factor is the political and cultural domination of the north till 755. Not only did the northern courts in that peaceful time act as a magnet for talent from all over China, but the styles in art and living that were fashionable in Ch'ang-an were copied throughout the empire. It must not be forgotten, however, that this artistic orthodoxy—the styles, for example, of Yen Li-pen, Li Ssu-hsün, and Wu Tao-tzu—was not in itself entirely of northern origin. For nearly three hundred years before the Sui, Nanking had set the fashion, which the north had belatedly taken up. The Sui and T'ang landscapists such as Chan Tzu-ch'ien and Tung Po-chen were followers, not of earlier northern masters, of whose very existence there is considerable doubt, but of Chang Seng-yu and the School of Nanking. The style, therefore, that radiated outwards from Ch'ang-an would have been perfectly acceptable in the southeast, because its origins were largely southern.

Was there, then, a northern tradition at all? The historians are silent about any northern landscapists before the Northern Chou and Sui, yet we can assume from the evidence of Tunhuang, Caves 249 and 419, for example, that a decorative and cosmopolitan style of landscape painting was applied, in a subservient capacity, to the illustration of Buddhist themes in the temples of north China. As with northern sculpture, we can suppose that, apart from its foreign elements, northern landscape painting also reflected, after a considerable time lag, the style that had been developed in free China.

In a more general sense, the recovery of the north, and the siting of the twin capitals on soil rich in the remains and memories of Chou and Han, certainly rekindled the old northern spirit. This renaissance was not fully under way until well into the eighth century, when a vigorous revival of traditional northern culture came as a long-delayed counterblast to the somewhat artificial styles of the south that had hitherto been in fashion at the northern court. In the world of ideas this took the form of a limited Confucian revival, in letters, of the *ku-wen* movement, in both of which Han Yü (786–824) was a dominant figure. In calligraphy it is manifest in the promotion by Yen Chen-ch'ing (709–785) of the austere powerful *li shu* of the Han tablets as a corrective to the seductive elegance of the southern Wang Hsi-chih tradition. Whether in painting there was a comparable renaissance of ancient values and styles is not altogether clear. If it occurred at all it must have been in the art of figure painting, for which there were northern precedents going back to the Han Dynasty. But there was no ancient tradition of northern landscape painting for eighth-century artists to revive, hence no development in that quarter comparable to the *ku-wen* movement.

The position in Chekiang-Kiangsu was quite different. Not only was there in the eighth century the memory of nearly three hundred years during which Nanking had been the creative

centre in landscape painting, as in all the arts; but the southeast had inherited no earlier Confucian tradition to conjure up as a weapon against the cult of individualism and of art for art's sake. Moreover, the climate and environment of the lower Yangtze Valley invited an intimate, natural communion with nature, an easy spontaneity of behavior and expression very different from the rigour of spirit and body demanded in the north by the traditional Confucian training and the severity of the northern climate. If the creative men of the south had fewer roots in the ancient culture, they were not shackled by it either.

So it was inevitable that once the An Lu-shan Rebellion and the troubles that followed it had destroyed the prestige of the northern capitals, there was no longer an artistic orthodoxy, justified by the power of the central authority, to demand the allegiance of the southern painters. Moreover, the southerners could not feel the utter despair that came over northern poets such as Tu Fu and Po Chü-i when they mused on the ruins of Loyang and Ch'ang-an, and remembered them in the days of their greatness. On the contrary, though perhaps none consciously knew it, the southern painters were set free, and so came into their own. It was as if a dam had burst; and the century from 750–850 saw, if the records are reliable, the emergence in the south of some of the most powerful and original landscape painting in the history of Chinese art. Of the immediate predecessors of that towering figure Chang Tsao we know nothing, but there must surely have been southern painters in the first half of the dynasty who had kept burning, however dimly, the lamp lit by Chang Seng-yu and Lu T'an-wei. Even before the debacle of 756 a new awareness of the south had been awakened by the poets, notably Meng Hao-jan and Li Po, who sang of the beauty of the Yangtze Valley and perhaps thereby helped to stimulate the southward flow of poets, scholars, and painters that followed the Rebellion.

When, therefore, Tung Ch'i-ch'ang spoke of the evolution of a Northern and a Southern School of landscape painting in the T'ang Dynasty he was essentially right, but for the wrong reason. He held that the two schools had risen simultaneously in the eighth century in the north, and his choice of the terms Northern and Southern seems to have been due solely to what he considered an apt analogy (regarding methods) with the two schools of Ch'an Buddhism. What he did not see—and being a native of the Nanking region it is astonishing that he did not see it—was that the names Northern and Southern were literally applicable to two distinct traditions in painting, just as they were to two distinct traditions in calligraphy and ceramics, and that these were in existence long before the class distinction arose among painters of different kinds upon which Tung Ch'i-ch'ang chiefly based his doctrines.

Moreover, it is curious that in formulating his doctrine of the Northern and Southern Schools, Tung Ch'i-ch'ang did not realise, or remark on, the fact that the seeds of the pictorial tradition which he called Southern had been sown centuries before the T'ang in the very area where he and his friends were living. Perhaps he was uncomfortably aware that the periods when the Chiangnan area had flourished—the Six Dynasties, late T'ang, and Five Dynasties—had been times when China was in turmoil or partly under foreign occupation. In the eyes of an orthodox Confucian, the great eras in Chinese civilisation were those when the intelligentsia were loyally

serving the virtuous ruler of a united empire; and the reign of Ming-huang was such a golden age. But history shows that art does not reflect political events; if it did, the Victorian era would have been a high point in the history of English painting. Perhaps it was an unconscious will to believe that great art can only be produced by great men in great periods that excluded from the mind of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang—and indeed of many generations of Chinese painters and critics—the possibility that, before the Mongol occupation, which drove all upright and talented men into spiritual exile, great art might have been produced by a drunken eccentric in the provinces at a time when the empire was falling apart.

CHAPTER V

Notes on the Landscape Painters of Sui and T'ang

A history of T'ang landscape painting ought properly to be woven about the masters, their lives, their major works, their relations with one another. We should be able to chronicle and illustrate the development of the art through three hundred years, the influence of one painter upon another, the emergence of schools. If the evidence is much too fragmentary to make that possible, we can still cull, not only from books on painting but also from poetry and *belles lettres* in general, enough to give us at least an impression of who these men were who advanced the art so significantly. That this does not add up to a history of T'ang landscape painting no one knows better than I!

THE FORERUNNERS

After the catastrophic events of the third century, when the whole of north China came under barbarian rule, little seems to have been produced in the north that was not either Buddhist or courtly figure painting, and it is a long time before we read of any landscape painters in the northern capitals. The first northerner who deserves mention, if only in passing, is Yang Tzu-hua, who held high official posts in close attendance upon Wen-hsüan-ti of the Northern Ch'i (ruled 550-560). He was famous for his horses and dragons, and was admired as a figure painter by Yen Li-pen.¹ Chang Yen-yüan mentions among his surviving works his *Noble Ladies of Northern Ch'i Strolling in a Park* and a screen of *People in a Palace Garden*. Both were the sort of courtly subject that had been popular since the fourth century and were to remain so through the T'ang. We know nothing about his style; he is not mentioned in any other source; and we can now forget him again.

A much more considerable figure was Chan Tzu-ch'ien, among the most influential of the early northern landscape painters. Chang Yen-yüan tells us that he was active under the Northern Ch'i and Northern Chou, and took high office at the beginning of the Sui.² He was noted for his painting of architecture, figures, horses, and landscapes, in which *chih-ch'ih ch'ien li* (a thousand *li* are depicted in a scant foot)—a conventional term of praise recalling the earlier wonder at the painter's power of pictorial compression, soon taken so much for granted that it is seldom noted again. Yet Chang Yen-yüan considered his style archaic; he brackets him with Yang Ch'i-tan, chiefly known as a fresco painter in Buddhist monasteries, but painter also of an *Imperial Progress to Loyang* and a *Palace Ladies' Excursion*. Of the style of Chan and Yang, Chang Yen-yüan, with his usual contempt for these pioneers, writes:

In the first years of our Dynasty . . . Yang and Chan (Tzu-ch'ien) concentrated their attention upon (wall-paintings in) palaces and monasteries. And although the accessories (trees, rocks etc.) had been gradually modified, even they, when they represented rocks, still strove as before after (an appearance of) being carved and hollowed out like the axblade edges of melted ice. And when they painted trees they made the branches with sweeping strokes, and then the leaves (as though) minutely engraved. (They painted) mostly the (phoenix)—roosting *wu-t'ung* and the luxuriant willow, and redoubling their toil they only grew more clumsy, so that the result is not worth the colours (used to produce it).³

Several of Chan Tzu-ch'ien's landscape paintings survived into the T'ang Dynasty. A *Ch'ang-an ch'ie-ma jen-wu t'u* (Street Scene: literally, Carriages, Horsemen, and People in Ch'ang-an) is recorded both in the *Chen-kuan kuang-szu hua-lu* (circa 627) and the *Ming-hua chi*. There is in the Palace Museum collection in Taiwan a picture with this title attributed to the tenth-century painter Chao Yen, which would be in the same tradition.⁴ Both sources also list a hunting picture, a painting in *pai hua* (plain line) of the *Nan-chiao*, Southern Suburbs, presumably of Ch'ang-an, and a picture of various palaces and parks. In the eleventh century Mi Fu noted in his collected jottings, *Hua shih*, that Li Kung-lin owned a painting by Chan illustrating a northern expedition into the Ordos region (Shuo-fang) in which the small figures were done in brilliant colour.⁵ As so often happens, Chan Tzu-ch'ien's reputation, and the work attributed to him, grow with the centuries. The *Hua chieh* (1330) calls him the ancestor of T'ang painting.⁶ *T'u-hua chieh-wen chih* (circa 1070) allots him a painting, *Yü Regulating the Waters*, not mentioned in any earlier source.⁷ It is possible that the large, impressive and very dark hanging scroll of this subject in the Palace Museum collection is ultimately derived from a painting by Chan, although the bold handling suggests the early Ming revival rather than the T'ang style.⁸ The "melon-plucking picture" allotted to Chan in the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* is an anomaly, as the incident so euphemistically described took place in the mid-eighth century (see below, page 122). His four scrolls of the Four Methods of Conveyance, *Ssu-ts'ai t'u*, was in the collection of the Emperor Hui-tsung, who loved these pictures so much that he could not tear himself away from them.⁹ The landscape *Yu ch'un t'u* (Excursion in Springtime) illustrated in plates 40–42, which came to light in Peking after the Second World War and was first exhibited at Yenching

University in 1948, bears the artist's name and this title in what purports to be the hand of Sung Hui-tsung. It is discussed in chapter VII, on style.

Several writers couple Chan Tzu-ch'ien's name with that of Tung Po-jen,¹⁰ who rose to high office under Sui Wen-ti. He was famous for his paintings of pavilions and towers; in these he had a distinguished pupil, the early T'ang master of architectural painting T'an Chih-min.¹¹ As a landscapist Tung Po-jen was handicapped by the fact that he lived in a flat, featureless region without rivers and mountains, and so he concentrated on courtly themes: it was not, Chang remarks, that he didn't know how to paint landscapes, but simply that he lacked the practice. He records several of Tung's pictures which must have been landscapes: Emperor Ming of the Chou out hunting; several paintings of towers and pavilions; and a farming scene. T'ien Seng-liang, who studied under him and Chan Tzu-ch'ien, also excelled in "rural scenes and rustic houses."¹² What were these farming scenes like? It is hard to imagine them, but there are vignettes in some of the Tunhuang landscapes which are at least suggestive of details although no more than that (see, for example, *Dunhuang Bihua* plates 67 and 75).

Cheng Fa-shih held high official appointments under both the Chou and the Sui. Chang Yen-yüan, who considered him Chang Seng-yu's best pupil, and with Seng-yu one of the two best Sui painters, describes his versatility in rather extravagant terms:

Even to recording the circumstances of a hundred years (historical subjects), the amusements of southern neighbours and villages of the north, the chariots and troops of the tenth month, the motion of flowing waters and floating clouds—even (in such subjects) there is an atmosphere of Chin and Chang, and the gorgeousness of precious stones. Flying towers and many-storeyed buildings are set about with lofty groves and lovely trees; jade-green pools and silk-white rapids are covered with a profusion of various flowers and fragrant herbs, so that one cannot help but have vague thoughts of a terrace in spring—in this he is beyond comparison.¹³

The landscapes of his time (middle antiquity) were "delicate and precise, refined and closely knit, and exceedingly charming." There had been precedents for these luxuriant, rather artificial landscapes a century and more earlier, when Ku K'ai-chih, Shih Tao-shih and other southern painters had illustrated the descriptive *fu* of Chang Heng and Tso Ssu.¹⁴ Cheng Fa-shih's landscape paintings included a *Street Scene in Loyang*, a *Northern Ch'i Emperor Out Hunting*, and *Wandering in a Garden in Springtime*; Hui-tsung's collection included four scrolls under Cheng's name entitled *Reading the Tablet*. If the attribution is correct, this may be the earliest recorded version of a subject that was immortalised by Li Ch'eng in the tenth century.¹⁵

Among the shadowy late sixth-century painters whose work included some landscapes, three are worth a brief glance. Feng T'i-chia was a man of Hopei who specialised in painting the scenery beyond the Great Wall.¹⁶ Perhaps there are echoes of his style in the vignettes of desert scenery in Caves 323 and 172 (plates 13 and 25) at Tunhuang, where a few bushes and stunted trees beside a river snaking back to the horizon are the only visible things in an otherwise featureless landscape. Sun Shang-tzu was chiefly known as a figure painter, but Chang Yen-yüan thought he was better than Cheng Fa-shih in painting trees and rocks¹⁷ and described him as

master of the bizarre technique of the quivering brush, *chau pi*: he was "highly endowed with nervous energy, *ch'i-li*, so that his robes, hands, feet, leaves of trees and currents of rivers all quivered."¹⁸ Chang Yen-yüan describes Yang Ch'i-tan, who did a painting of an *Imperial Progress to Loyang*, in rather uncomplimentary terms in a famous passage in which his archaic style is compared unfavourably with that of Wu Tao-tzu.¹⁹

THE MASTERS OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY

Although Chang Yen-yüan says that Yen Li-te and his younger brother Yen Li-pen were "faultless in every subject," there is little to show that either of them contributed much, if anything, to advance the art of landscape painting. The remarks he made about the limitations of Yang Ch'i-tan and Chan Tzu-ch'ien, quoted above, he applied equally to the two Yens, and the most that can be said of either is that they must have included landscape settings in some of their figure subjects.²⁰ The elder brother Li-te, already famous under the Sui, became president of the Board of Works under T'ai-tsung. He was chiefly noted as an architect, but there was in one of the galleries of the Chao-ching-kung temple in Ch'ang-an a painting of trees and rocks thought to be by him, still visible in the mid-ninth century.²¹ Chang Yen-yüan mentions under his name a picture of the Yü-hua-kung, a summer palace that he had designed and built for T'ai-tsung in Shensi, where by decree the great Buddhist theologian Hsüan-tsang was ordered to do his translations. Tu Fu later wrote a poem about it.²²

Yen Li-te's more famous younger brother Yen Li-pen, according to several sources, painted the western regions—presumably imaginary pictures of Central Asia or even of India;²³ in the same category was his picture illustrating the canon of Lao Tzu's journey to the West.²⁴ Mi Fu mentions a scroll of this name with a false attribution to Yen Li-pen as being in the collection of one of his friends.²⁵ No versions of this picture with any claim to have originated with Yen Li-pen have survived. The well-known picture of *Barbarians Bringing Tribute*, in the Palace Museum, Taipei, is no help so far as the landscape is concerned. The figures may be based on an original of Yen Li-pen, but the landscape, such as it is, is in the style of the fourteenth century or later. Chang Yen-yüan also credits him with a twelve-panel screen of rural scenes "in which the handling of the composition is better [than anything] ancient or modern." This sounds interesting, but not even copies survive.

The first T'ang painter of whose landscape style we are given any clear information was Fan Ch'ang-shou, who served at the beginning of the dynasty as a cavalry officer. The *Ming-hua chi* says simply that he did genre scenes, and mentions no landscapes at all, although it quotes Tou Meng as saying that "he would seize his brush, striking and sweeping, bringing it down on the paper as if it were flying. He lacked grace, but all in all he was a good painter."²⁶ These remarks presumably refer to his figure painting and seem to foreshadow the art of Wu Tao-tzu. Chu Ching-hsüan is much more informative. "He was an excellent painter of popular genre and farm-house scenes," he writes.

Large numbers of his renditions of scenery and secular figures are in collectors' hands. In his paintings of landscapes with trees and rocks, oxen and horses and other domestic creatures, the natural forms would wind forward out of the distance while the animals strayed freely over quiet pastures. All of this he would do wonderfully well, rendering all the fine points of each element in a way that justifies ranking him next to Chang Seng-yu.²⁷

Again we are reminded of some of the landscape vignettes in the Tunhuang frescoes. But Chu Ching-hsüan also notes that Fan was "prolific to the point of over-richness." In the history of Chinese painting he is noteworthy for another reason, for Chu states that it was he who invented the "modern type of screen" (*p'ing-feng*)—a format that played a crucial role in the development of T'ang and Sung landscape painting.²⁸ He may mean the multi-leafed folding screen, for standing screens are much older than the T'ang, but of this we cannot be sure.

Wang T'o-tzu was a talented seventh-century landscape painter about whom even less is known, although praise of him is extravagant. The *Ming-hua chi* says that he was very good "in rendering the awesomeness of peaks and ranges," and notes that people said that so far as landscape painting was concerned, "T'o-tzu was the head and [Wu] Tao-tzu the feet."²⁹ He quotes Tou Meng as saying that Wang "had no equal in any age in representing the untrodden and inspiring." He did landscapes which were preserved in the Western Storehouse of Ch'ung-fu Ssu in Ch'ang-an,³⁰ and a painting of Mount Sumeru rising above the waves.³¹

LI SSU-HSÜN AND LI CHAO-TAO

In view of the position that these two artists later attained as pillars of the so-called Northern School—which we might with varying degrees of accuracy and in different contexts call the orthodox, palace, coloured, professional, or craftsman-painter's tradition—it is important to find out if possible just what kind of pictures they did paint. The myth, however, has replaced the reality. One must ask if there is enough evidence left to dispel the myth and restore even a fraction of the reality.

The facts of Li Ssu-hsün's career are well-known and need only briefly be restated. Born in 651, he was a grandson of a nephew of the first T'ang emperor, and member of a distinguished family that included four other painters beside himself: his son Li Chao-tao, his younger brother Ssu-hui, Ssu-hui's son Lin-fu, and Lin-fu's nephew Ts'ou. During the persecution of members of the imperial family by the Empress Wu, Li Ssu-hsün fled from Chiang-lu, where he held an administrative appointment. He was recalled after the restoration by Chung-tsung (ruled 705–710), who gave him the title Duke of P'eng-ch'eng and the rank of Grand General of the Right Guard. He is believed to have died about 718.³²

As a painter, Chu Ching-hsüan tells us, "Li Ssu-hsün's style was lofty and original, his landscapes supremely excellent. Birds and beasts, or plants and trees, he always characterised perfectly." Chang Yen-yüan goes further: "In his paintings of landscapes or of trees and rocks, his brush style had an intense forcefulness. His rapids really seemed to be running water; his clouds

and vapours added a hazy uncertainty. Sometimes when one looks at [his paintings on] the theme of Taoist Immortals, [one senses] dimly all the mystery of cliffs and ranges." That is all the T'ang texts say about Li Ssu-hsün's art, except for Chang Yen-yüan's baffling, and as it stands meaningless, comment that "the development of landscape painting began with Wu and was perfected by the two Li." Ching Hao in the *Pi-fa chi* describes his style with some precision. "General Li Ssu-hsün," he writes, "shows a deep understanding of the principles [of nature] and wide *Thought*. His brushwork is very fine and detailed. His works exhibit skillfulness and ornamental beauty, but lack greatly in application of ink wash."

The anecdotes that have been handed down enhance the legend but tell us little more about the style: how, for instance, Li Ssu-hsün and Wu Tao-tzu both did landscapes in the Ta-t'ung Hall of the palace, "Wu in a day, Li in several months." As Wu Tao-tzu was a boy of fifteen or sixteen when Li Ssu-hsün died, this is more likely to be true, if at all, of his son Chao-tao. The same applies to the story told by Chu Ching-hsüan of the screen painted for Ming Huang in the T'ien-pao era (742-755), of which the emperor is said to have remarked to Ssu-hsün: "From the screen that you painted, Sir, I have heard the sound of water coming at night. Yours is a mastery that partakes of the divine, and your landscapes take first place in the Dynasty." Of Li Chao-tao even less is known, except that he finished his career as vice-president of the Right Grand Secretariat of the Crown Prince. Early verdicts on his painting are contradictory. Chu Ching-hsüan considered that "Chao-tao did not equal his father in intelligence and strength of brush, though his depictions of landscapes and of birds and beasts were very detailed and clever." Chang Yen-yüan, on the other hand, says, "He changed his father's style . . . and even surpassed him."³³

The terms used in these passages—"lofty and original," "detailed and clever," "hazy uncertainty," "intense forcefulness," "mystery"—are so vague that it is doubtful whether we are justified at all in speaking of a Li style, let alone attempting to distinguish the manners of father and son. The increasingly precise picture we have of the Li manner is based largely on Sung and later writers and painters. For example, Kuo Jo-hsü mentions that Tung Yüan had a coloured style like that of Li Ssu-hsün.³⁴ The *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* says: "Nowadays when people paint mountains in the coloured style they all follow him."³⁵ One of the most interesting comments is that of Mi Fu, who notes in the *Hua-shih* that a certain collector of his day owned some Japanese landscapes in colour, and that during the Southern T'ang period (937-975) these had been attributed to Li Ssu-hsün, a remark that throws light on the allegedly Japanese origins of the Yamato-c.³⁶ The *T'u-hui pao-chien* (1365) says of him that "in the use of brilliantly colourful gold and mineral green he constituted a school in himself."³⁷ Thus long before Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang—but also long after the eighth century—the tradition had been firmly established that Li Ssu-hsün and Li Chao-tao painted in a detailed, decorative style, using gold and mineral colours.

The titles of some of the paintings by the two Li are preserved. Among the pictures attributed to Li Ssu-hsün in Hui-tsung's collection were: two versions of the *Four Greybeards*;³⁸ three scrolls of *Idly Fishing among Mountains and Streams*; three of *A Multitude of Peaks and Dense Forests*. Later texts and catalogues credit him with a larger number of landscapes and of palaces and pavilions in

landscape settings. Of the paintings associated with the name of Li Su-hsün and now, or till recently, still in existence, none are works of the T'ang period. One of the most archaic in style is the *Chiu-ch'eng pi-shu t'u* (Chiu-ch'eng Summer Palace); it is a round fan painting on silk, now in the Palace Museum, Peking, depicting the summer palace of T'ang T'ai-tsung, formerly the Sui imperial palace Jen-shou-kung. The palace buildings in the foreground nestle against a group of mountains piling up to the left. The dominating colours are mineral blue and green; the pillars and walls are picked out in vermilion, the hills outlined in gold. Although this sumptuous little picture may derive from a composition by either Li Su-hsün or Li Chao-tao, the actual execution, notably the treatment of the distant mountains, suggests a date not earlier than the thirteenth century, and possibly later.

More paintings are kunged by early sources to Li Chao-tao than to his father. The *Ming-hua chi* notes that there was a landscape by him on a wall in the precinct of the Wan-an-kuan (Tower of Myriad-Fold Peace) in Ch'ang-an.³⁹ Pictures attributed to him in Hui-tsung's collection included two sunsets (*Lo-ch'ao t'u*), a seascape, and a spring landscape. The sunset theme, which appears only briefly in the history of Chinese painting, is discussed in Chapter VI. Hui-tsung's collection also contained a picture attributed to Li Chao-tao entitled *Gathering Melons* (*Che-kua t'u*), a euphemism for the flight of the emperor Ming-huang from An Lu-shan. The picture derives its name from the fact that one version showed a court lady gathering melons, evidently intended to suggest that this was no more than a leisurely excursion. Several early texts also attribute to Li Chao-tao a version of the picture of the Chiu-ch'eng Summer Palace.

At least five surviving ancient paintings are more or less closely associated with the name of Li Chao-tao. In the Palace Museum there is a large hanging scroll depicting the scenery of the Ch'ü River (*Ch'ü-chiang t'u*).⁴⁰ It shows an elaborate complex of palace buildings set in a towering landscape of peaks and rivers. The atmosphere is festive, the style archaistic rather than archaic, suggesting the hand of an early Ming professional painter. *The Loyang Mansion*, a richly-detailed album leaf in the National Palace Museum, preserves the Li subject matter, but the style is that of the twelfth or thirteenth century at the earliest. Closer to the Li manner is a long panorama in gold and blue-green (*Chin-pi shan-shui t'u*) in the Sasakawa collection in Japan. Though weak in execution, this cold, brooding landscape, in style both decorative and bare, may possibly derive from one of Li Chao-tao's paintings.

The Palace Museum collection in Taiwan contains a large landscape of towering peaks, *Travellers in the Mountains in Spring*, traditionally attributed to Li Chao-tao. It depicts a group of elegantly dressed men and women on horseback winding down through a defile into a clearing in the woods at the base of a triple mass of cloud-ringed peaks. The verticals are deliberately exaggerated; the style, particularly in the painting of the rocks, is precise and somewhat mannered—indeed, rather what might be expected of a court painter of later times attempting to imitate the Li style. This picture is closely related to another much smaller and finer version of the same subject in Taiwan, entitled *Ming-huang's Journey to Shu* (Ming-huang hsing-Shu t'u) (plates 43–45). The style and content of this fascinating picture, in which the composition is

spread out laterally instead of being squeezed into a vertical panel, are discussed in more detail below. Although certain conventions in the landscape, and the extraordinary freshness of the colours, indicate that it is probably a copy of the Sung Dynasty at the earliest, this picture, more than any other surviving early work, seems to preserve the courtly style of the landscape painting of the eighth century, of which Li Chao-tao was the chief exponent. But although several pictures of this incident are attributed to him in Sung and later texts, it is doubtful whether Li Chao-tao himself ever painted this subject. By 756, when the disastrous flight took place, he would have been a very old man, if indeed he was still living; and it seems unlikely that court painters would have been called upon to record it, in so gay and sumptuous a manner, while the bitter memory was still fresh. Some authorities even doubt that this picture depicts the emperor's flight at all, and have suggested that it simply celebrates an imperial picnic. But whatever its subject, and whoever its author, it is an important document in the evolution of the green and blue "palace style" associated with the names of Li Ssu-hsün and Li Chao-tao.

With the passage of the centuries every new painting in the Li style, every additional critical comment, has added one more veil to those hanging before the original painters and hiding them from our eyes. We cannot strip these veils away because in one sense Li Ssu-hsün and Li Chao-tao exist today only in the images imprinted on these veils—images which become the clearer, and the more false, the closer they are to us in time. The same may be said of Wang Wei or indeed of any great early Chinese master. In the history of early Chinese landscape painting it is these images that are the reality, for the tradition has a greater power of survival, a more enduring substance, than the work of any individual painter who may have helped to create it.

Let us leave the last word on Li Ssu-hsün to a great Sung poet who saw what he considered to be Li's *Yangtze at a Lonely Island*, a picture not otherwise mentioned in any early source. Even if in these wonderful lines by Su Tung-p'o the Li Ssu-hsün tradition has been further falsified, it has also, in terms of Chinese art history, been enriched.

The mountains are misty grey;
The river is cold and still
These are the sublime Ta Ku and Hsiao Ku peaks
And between them the Yangtze, broad as a lake.
The banks are crumbling cliffs,—bleak solitudes
Where only gibbons and wild birds dwell.
And, above, stately trees assail the leaden sky.

Listen to the rowing song from the passenger barge!
As the craft glides in mid-stream the notes resound
Over the level sand of the lonely island.
The faint breeze cannot carry the melody
Up to the Ku mountains;
But for a long time from the boat far below
It soars higher and higher.

Now dawn is astir in the mist-toned valley
 And the two towering peaks are ominous with colour and light.
 But the travellers on the barge are not overwhelmed
 By this double splendour.
 For they know, in bygone years,
 Hsiao Ku was betrothed to her handsome suitor.⁴¹

WU TAO-TZU

Wu Tao-tzu seems to have brought to his landscapes the same fiery energy that he poured out in his innumerable Buddhist frescoes in the temples of Loyang and Ch'ang-an. Both the *Ming-hua chi* and the *Ming-hua lu* state that he painted the landscapes on the road to Shu, though the accounts differ significantly. This is Chu Ching-hsüan:

It was also in the K'ai-yüan period that Ming-huang all at once thought of the waters of the Chia-ling River on the road to Szechwan, and so made government post horses available to Master Wu so that he might be sent there to sketch the scenery. On the day the latter returned the Emperor asked for a report. Wu said: "His Majesty's servant has no sketches (*fen*); all is set down in his heart." Thereafter he was commanded to depict the Chia-ling River in the Ta-t'ung Hall, and complete a panorama of over 300 *li* in a single day. At the time General Li Ssu-hsün was renowned for his landscapes, and he too was commanded to do a picture there, which he took several months to finish. Ming-huang's comment was: "Li Ssu-hsün's achievement of many months, and Wu Tao-tzu's work of a single day both reach the extreme of excellence."⁴²

If there is substance in this famous story, it must be Li Chao-tao who was Wu's rival and not Li Ssu-hsün, who died in 716 when Wu Tao-tzu was still in his teens, too young to be sent on such a mission. Chang Yen-yüan tells us that on the road to Shu Wu drew the landscape direct from nature (he uses the term *hsieh-mao*, a phrase which as Acker notes is generally used for portrait painting from life and implies a high degree of verisimilitude). It is possible, of course that both versions are true, and that having made detailed sketches along the way Wu was then able from memory to create a finished painting.

One important composition in which Wu Tao-tzu had a hand was the painting of the Golden Bridge, *Chiu-ch'iao t'u*, depicting, according to Kuo Jo-hsü, an incident when T'ang Ming-huang was returning, accompanied by his full retinue, from celebrating the sacrifices on T'ai-shan.

Now as the cortège was crossing the Golden Bridge (at Shang-tang in Shensi), the Imperial path turned, so that the All-highest looked out over the space of several tens of *li* [filled with] the sparkling gayety of banners and standards and the files of his escorting guard . . . Eventually the Emperor summoned Wu Tao-tzu, Wei Wu-t'ien, and Ch'en Hung, and ordered them to collaborate on a picture of the Golden Bridge. In the Imperial visage and the white horse, "Light of the Night," on which the Emperor was riding, Ch'en Hung did his share; as did Wu Tao-tzu with the bridge, the landscape, the carriages and humans, plants, trees, hawks, utensils, weapons and tents, and Wei Wu-t'ien with the dogs, horses, donkeys and mules, oxen, sheep, camels, monkeys, rabbits,

pigs, and the like. When the picture was completed, it was dubbed the "Three Perfections" (*san chieh*).⁴³

This picture is not mentioned under Wu Tao-tzu's name in any T'ang source that I can find. T'ang Hou in the *Hua-chien* says that Ming-huang made an imperial progress to Shu and had a painting of the Golden Bridge made in which Ch'en Hung did the figures.⁴⁴ It is hard to imagine that he did not know the *T'u-hua chien-wen chih*, yet he makes no reference to Kuo Jo-hsü's very different version of the story.

Li K'an (circa 1260-1310) states in his *Chu-p'u* (Manual on the Bamboo) that Wu Tao-tzu painted bamboos.⁴⁵ While this is very possible, for Wu seems to have had a remarkably wide repertoire, there is no mention of any bamboo painting by him in any T'ang or Sung source.

It is hard to form an estimate of Wu Tao-tzu as a landscape painter, although about his technique there is little doubt. Chu Ching-hsüan says that "what is incomparable is his brushwork, which is always profusely varied and full of an untrammelled energy. In a number of instances his wall-paintings were carried out in ink alone, no one thereafter venturing to add colour to them."⁴⁶ In fact colour was added to them on occasion, with unfortunate results. The *Ming-hua chi* says that he would occasionally paint on the walls of Buddhist temples, employing according to his fancy "strange rocks that (looked as though) one might touch them, and rushing torrents from which (it seemed) one might dip (water)."⁴⁷ I will have more to say about strange rocks later on.

The poet Tu Fu, who was in Loyang in 741, described a series of paintings with landscapes by Wu which he saw on the walls of the shrine to the Spirit of Lao Tzu (which Chang Yen-yüan calls the Lao-chun Miao, and Chu Ching-hsüan the Hsüan-yüan Miao), to the north of the city. His verse runs, in part:

... The green tiles on the roof will keep out the cold of the early winter.
The golden pillar in the yard will transmit the unity of cosmic essence.
Mountains and rivers display their support of the painted doors.
The sun and the moon revolve around the carved beams ...
He transported the landscape and the scene
And made them shine with exquisite liveliness on the palace walls ...
On the temple grounds the green cedars cast deep shadows.
The pears are reddish, tinged by severe frost;
From the eaves comes the music of the jade-like hangings driven by the wind.
On the exposed well stands the windlass frozen like silver.⁴⁸

Neither Chu nor Chang mention any landscapes by Wu in this shrine, although the latter quotes (in slightly different form) part of Tu Fu's poem. However, Chang does mention a painting of the *Sacrifice to Mount T'ai*, which could have had some sort of landscape setting, in the Hung-tao Kuan, a Taoist monastery in Loyang.⁴⁹

Whether Wu Tao-tzu made any significant contribution to the development of landscape technique is an interesting question. The tenth-century master Ching Hao said, "Wu Tao-tzu's brush excelled in images (shapes), and bone-spirit (*ku-ch'i*) came of itself to a high degree ... But

alas he lacked ink."⁵⁰ The sweeping, impetuous line for which Wu was famous, while ideal for figure painting, was hardly suited to depicting landscape, and his "lack of ink" meant that his ability to suggest depth and atmosphere by the subtle use of graded washes must have been limited—and this at a time when landscape painting, in the hand of masters such as Chang Tsao, was moving towards a full mastery of tonal values. Yet Chang Yen-yüan's statement that "the development of landscape painting began with Wu" may not be simply a pardonable exaggeration on the part of Wu's greatest admirer. Perhaps by his very freedom in handling the brush he stimulated the reaction against the tight, jewel-like manner of earlier masters such as Chan Tzu-ch'ien, and so helped to lay the foundation for the expressive use of the brush in landscape painting which the scholar painters were later to explore so much more deeply.

TWO SCHOLAR PAINTERS: LU HUNG AND CHENG CH'EN

Lu Hung was an artist about whom very little was said by T'ang writers, but whose reputation grew with the centuries—no doubt because, like Wang Wei, to whom he was later compared, he was the ideal type of the gentleman painter.⁵¹ The *T'ang-ch'ao ming-hua lu* does not mention him at all. Chang Yen-yüan merely says "he was a lofty scholar good at the *pa-fen* script. He was expert in painting mountains and water, trees and rocks. He had his retreat on Sung-shan. At the beginning of the K'ai-yüan era (713–742) he was given an appointment as Censor Counsellor to the Emperor, but refused it." In his entry in the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* this is elaborated. He is said when offered the appointment to have made excuses, and was then given a country villa (literally, thatched hall, *ts'ao-t'ang*) and permitted to retire. "He was very good at delineating landscape with 'level distance' (*p'ing yüan*). If the streams and rocks had not entered his very being, and the mists and clouds had not so obsessed him that his heart grasped them and his hand responded to them, he would not have been able to create [such pictures]."⁵²

The *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* states that there was a painting of his *ts'ao-t'ang* in the Imperial collection, and says that it had been compared to Wang Wei's Wang-ch'uan scroll. Some much later writers say that the *ts'ao-t'ang* scroll had ten scenes. Mi Fu noted that a gentleman had purchased an entire collection of five hundred scrolls from an official's family for half a million in copper cash. On looking through them later he discovered a scroll of Lu Hung's *ts'ao-t'ang t'u* by the artist himself, which in his opinion was alone worth a hundred thousand.⁵³ T'ang Hou in the *Hua chien* says that he had seen a copy by a Sung artist; "its brushwork, composition and atmosphere captivated one, and from this authentic relic one could realise what an admirable man he was."⁵⁴

The version of this painting in the Palace Museum collection in Taipei (plate 105) preserves some archaic features, notably the composition of each scene in "space cells" set off somewhat artificially by rocks or trees like a stage set, and the naive sense of scale, with the trees kept small and the figures disproportionately large. Also in places the plants and foliage are drawn with a somewhat laboured precision that is clearly intended to evoke the style of antiquity. In general,

however, the brushwork and flavour of the picture suggest the fifteenth century, and there are one or two features, such as the curving mud wall in the first scene, which might have been painted by Shen Chou. It seems possible that this is a translation into the ink painting of the Ming literati of a picture which in some earlier versions might have been a rather decorative, precisely-handled work in colour such as Ch'ien Hsüan painted from time to time, and that, as with Wang Wei, Lu Hung's style (if this picture is any guide at all) was rather closer to the orthodox T'ang manner than later critics and copyists maintained. But there survive no T'ang accounts of his painting, and this is sheer guesswork.

Hui-tsung's collection also contained under Lu Hung's name a picture of a gathering of Buddhist (or Taoist) sages in a pine forest, *Sung-lin hui-chen t'u*; and a painting of a fancy rock (or rocks), *K'o-shih t'u*. Neither are recorded in any earlier source.

A colourful figure in the early history of literary painting was Cheng Ch'ien, a native of Chengchow who was considered one of the most talented and learned men of his day, well versed in geography, astronomy, pharmacology, and military history, a renowned calligrapher, painter and poet.⁵⁵ He had a chequered career. After rising to high office under Ming-huang, he was banished for attempting an unauthorised history of the dynasty; later he was recalled. Since he was a self-indulgent man who drank a good deal he was not considered suitable for a routine administrative post, and so Ming-huang in 750 created specially for him the College of Literary Extension, K'uang-wen Kuan, and appointed him its first professor. Six years later he, with Wang Wei and Chang Tsao, was caught in Ch'ang-an by the An Lu-shan Rebellion. An Lu-shan appointed him chief auxiliary secretary of the Board of Navigation and Irrigation, but he pretended to be mad and begged to be allowed to take the humble job of a market manager; he even sent a secret letter to the new Emperor Su-tsung at Ling-wu. After the restoration his efforts to clear himself of the inevitable charge of treason were unavailing, and he ended his life, in 764, in exile as Commissioner of Census at T'ai-chou on the southeast coast. Tu Fu gives a delightful glimpse of this scholarly eccentric at the K'uang-wen Kuan:

The Professor arrives at the college:
He ties his horse before the steps of the hall.
When drunk, he mounts his horse to leave.
Leaving his superior officers to curse after him.
Though he has had literary fame for thirty years
He is still too poor to provide cushions for visitors.
It is good that it is Dean Su Yü
From whom he can beg money for wine.⁵⁶

Painting was but one of Cheng Ch'ien's accomplishments. His biography in the *Hsin T'ang shu* calls him a good landscape painter, and the *Ming-hua lu* says that he was a competent painter of fish, landscapes, and rocks. The brief entry in the *Ming-hua chi* dwells chiefly on his bohemian nature and his companionship in poetry and drinking with Tu Fu and Li Po, and records that he once presented to Ming-huang a scroll of his verses written out in his own hand with his own

illustrations, which the Emperor called Cheng Ch'ien's "triple perfect achievement," *san chieh*.⁵⁷ With Pi Hung, Wang Wei, and others he decorated the walls of Tz'u-en Ssu in Ch'ang-an. The texts do not tell us what the themes of these paintings were, although some editions of the *Ming-hua chi* state that they were in *pai hua* (plain line). When one considers his activity as a poet and friend of poets, his close association with Wang Wei and Pi Hung, it is surprising that so little is said about his landscape painting. No T'ang source mentions any, and the earliest reference is to a painting of *Precipitous Mountains with Streams and Bridges* in Sung Hui-tsung's collection. His landscapes must have been rare even in his lifetime. We know nothing of his style or technique, but from the picture we have of him we may assume that his paintings were often free, calligraphic, and uninhibited (especially when he was drunk)—the spontaneous outpourings of a true amateur, painting only for a few kindred spirits.

WANG WEI

Born in T'ai-yüan in Shansi in 699 or 701, Wang Wei went to Ch'ang-an, where he graduated *chin-shih* at the (Chinese) age of twenty-three, and was appointed assistant in the Grand College of Music.⁵⁸ He got into a scrape and was briefly demoted to Shantung, but he was subsequently promoted again to a Junior Censorship. At about that time he bought a country estate, the Wang-ch'uan, about thirty miles south of the capital. He joined the talented group of writers and painters patronised by the Emperor's younger brother, Prince Ch'i. In 734 many of these luminaries transferred themselves to the court of Ming-huang, hitherto somewhat eclipsed by the salon of his more gifted brother. The rest of his life Wang Wei spent either in retirement at his beloved Wang-ch'uan or in government service. In 737 he was sent on an official mission to the northwest frontier region, and in 740 on another to south China.

Wang Wei's marriage must have been a singularly happy one, for he was deeply affected by the death of his wife in 730, after which he became a devout Buddhist, "abstained from meat and fine clothes," and even took lessons in Sanskrit. He never remarried. By choosing the personal name Mo-chieh, he showed his admiration for that devout intellectual Vimalakirti, who had got the better of Mañjuśrī in a legendary disputation; but just when he took the name is not known. With Cheng Ch'ien and Chang Tsao he was caught in the capital in 755, perhaps on account of illness, by the An Lu-shan Rebellion, and forced to take office in the rebel administration. After the restoration two years later all three were held under house arrest in the former mansion of Yang Kuo-chun, a cousin of Yang Kuei-fei. Ts'ui Yüan, a loyal minister whose services to the throne during the uprising had given him a position of great influence, had them decorate the walls of his house; in hopes of an early release they all devoted themselves assiduously to the work. "In the end," Kuo Jo-hsü reports, "everyone got off lightly, even those who were banished being assigned to good posts."⁵⁹ This was not, as we have seen, altogether true of Cheng Ch'ien, who died in exile; but Wang Wei, through the influence of his brother Wang Chin, was given a post in the new Crown Prince's household, from which he rose to membership in the Council of State, *Shang-shu yu-cheng*. He probably died in 761.

Wang Wei's landscape painting survives only in copies, and echoes of copies. None give more than a hint of his achievement. But much of his poetry survives intact to bear witness to what Cyril Birch called "perhaps the closest union with the natural world that has ever been expressed."⁶⁰ Already in the passionate *Elegies of Ch'u* in pre-Han times poets had found in the ever-changing forms and moods of nature a mirror for human feeling. Wang Wei goes further, for to this love of nature he adds a deeply metaphysical bent, so that the visible world of nature becomes the medium of communication through which man comes face to face with the ultimate reality. The philosophical message in his poetry is never explicit. Rather do the images of the countryside in all its moods and aspects, so minutely observed, create, as Birch put it "a sense of harmony, or even of dissolution of the self in nature"—which, reborn in each great poet and landscape painter, has been one of the supreme achievements of Chinese civilisation. Any educated Chinese, reading Wang Wei's verses and knowing him to have been a landscape painter also, would naturally conclude that he expressed in his landscapes the same intensity and profundity of feeling that shines through his poetry. Was this in fact the case? If we could answer that question with any certainty we would have a much better understanding of T'ang landscape painting than seems possible now.

In this connection, two lines of a poem of Su Tung-p'o are often quoted:

Wei Mo-chieh chih shih, shih chung yu hua;
*Kuan Mo-chieh chih hua, hua chung yu shih*⁶¹

which can be translated literally

Savouring Mo-chieh's poem—in his poem is a painting
Looking at his painting—in his painting is a poem.

Walcy indignantly asserts that it is a libel to make this apply to all his poetry and painting, and that Su was in fact referring to a particular case.⁶² But this is surely irrelevant; for the evidence suggests that Wang Wei's poetry was shot through with the precise imagery of a landscape painter, and that his landscape painting was profoundly poetic. Su Tung-p'o apprehended this in a poem in which he compares frescoes done respectively by Wu Tao-tzu and Wang Wei in the P'u-nan Hall and the pagoda of the K'ai-yüan temple, probably at Feng-hsiang-fu, seventy-five miles west of Sian. This poem is worth quoting at length:

Where can you see a fresco by Wu Tao-tzu?
Why, in K'ai Yüan Temple's P'u-Men Hall;
And go to the pagoda, east of K'ai Yüan,
There you will also find Mo-ch'i's handiwork.
I have known most of our master paintings
But these two are the greatest of them all.
Tao-tzu's art is solid, virile, free;
Vast like the ocean, forceful as its waves.
He would not take up his brush
Until the spirit of his conception

	700	705	710	713	720	730	740	750	756	760
RULERS	WU TSE- T'EN	CHUNG- TSUNG				HSÜAN-TSUNG (MING-HUANG)				HSIAO-
REIGN ERAS					K'AI-YÜAN ERA		T'EN-PAO ERA			
IMPORTANT EVENTS			713 <i>Buddhist Persecutions</i>					751 <i>Arab Victory in Turkestan</i>	756 <i>An Lu-shan Rebellion</i>	
PAINTERS						YANG T'ING-KUANG				
	LI SSU-HSÜN								CH'EN HUNG	
POETS										
ARCHAEOLOGY, ETC.										

Wholly possessed him
Then, once he had begun his work,
Ink fell like wind-driven rain.

On Wu's painting:

A background of mighty forests and towering crags
Is partly hidden by the wreathing mist.
The sun has risen, and we see a saintly Lohan
Expounding the Way of the Bodhisattva.
Those who understand weep with pity
For the sufferings of mankind.
The unbelievers erouch in terror
As myriads of fierce barbarians, and demons
With heads like the sea-turtle, rush upon them.

On Wang's painting:

Wang Wei is essentially a poet
There is a charm about his character
Like the fragrance of the orchid
And the sweet-scented grass.
I contemplate this painting of his
And it moves me, just as do his poems,
By its profound simplicity and living truth.

The Chi Yüan monks are frail and wizened
From stern fastings, and only cold ashes
Of wordly desires in their hearts.
About their temple gates are clumps of bamboos;
Snow clinging to the joints, hoarfrost whitens the roots,
The stalks cross in seeming confusion
And countless leaves are swayed by icy winds.
But each brushstroke is clear and precise
And has its perfect part in the great design.
It is difficult to overpraise the grandeur of Wu;
Still, he is regarded solely as a painter.
Mo-ch'i transcends the world of appearance,
As the arhat, soaring on wings of being,
Bids farewell to his fleshly cage.
Truly the works of both these masters
Are the progeny of rarest genius . . .
But the measure of Wang Wei's genius
No words can declare.⁶³

Wang Wei saw himself primarily as a literary man. When he wrote these celebrated lines,

In this present world
 I am wrongly called a poet;
 In a former existence
 I must have been a painter!
 That I cannot lay aside
 that extra occupation,
 Is something recognised
 by my contemporaries⁶⁴

he was only being modest about his poetry; but he needed to excuse his love of painting. For as a poet he could never be anything but a scholar, but when it came to painting, that was an art in which one could easily stray over the border into professionalism, so he begs his friends not to judge him too hard. Since Wang Wei, literary painters down the centuries have got the point, and have insisted, not always so wittily, that in painting they were but clumsy amateurs.

The name of Wang Wei is always associated with that of his country estate Wang-ch'uan near Feng-hsiang, in the foothills of the Chung-nan mountains, south of Ch'ang-an. Kuo Jo-hsiü says that he "laid out a villa" there himself. But a delightful brief description in Wang Wei's biography in the *Hsin T'ang shu* suggests that this may not have been necessary. "Late in life," the passage runs, "he acquired Sung Chih-wen's country estate at Lan-t'ien, at the mouth of the Wang River. The waters of the Wang circled round below the house. On the estate, with its bamboo-covered islets and flowered banks, his friends might wander along paths, or drift up and down in boats, play the lute and compose poems, and whistle and hum all day long."⁶⁵

Wang-ch'uan became part of his life, and he must have spent more and more of his time there. He describes it in many of his poems, but most movingly perhaps in a letter to his friend P'ei Ti:

Of late during the sacrificial month, the weather has been calm and clear, and I might easily have crossed the mountain. But I knew that you were conning the classics and did not dare disturb you. So I roamed about the mountain-side, rested at the Kan-p'ei Temple, dined with the mountain priests, and after dinner, came home again. Going northwards, I crossed the Yüan-pa, over whose waters the unclouded moon shone with dazzling rim. When night was far advanced, I mounted Hua-tzu's Hill and saw the moonlight tossed up and thrown down by the jostling waves of Wang River. On the wintry mountain distant lights twinkled and vanished; in some deep lane beyond the forest a dog barked at the cold, with a cry as fierce as a wolf's. The sound of villagers grinding their corn at night filled the gaps between the slow chimes of a distant bell.

Now I am sitting alone. I listen, but cannot hear my grooms and servants move or speak. I think much of old days; how hand in hand, composing poems as we went, we walked down twisting paths to the banks of clear streams.

We must wait for spring to come: till the grasses sprout and the trees bloom. Then wandering together in the spring hills we shall see the trout leap lightly from the stream, the white gulls stretch their wings, the dew fall on the green moss. And in the morning we shall hear the cry of curlews in the barley-fields.

It is not long to wait. Shall you be with me then? Did I not know the natural subtlety of your intelligence, I would not dare address to you so remote an invitation. You will understand that a deep feeling dictates this course.

Written without disrespect by Wang Wei, a dweller in the mountains.⁶⁶

With P'ei Ti, Wang Wei wrote a series of twenty-four paired poems which describe the delights of the estate: "Hua-tzu Hill in Autumn," "Deer Enclosure," "Hollow of Meng's Wall," "Path of the Ash Trees," and so on. This cycle may have been written before the An Lu-shan Rebellion, otherwise between Wang Wei's release from house arrest and P'ei Ti's departure for Ch'eng-tu, where he was already a district magistrate at the time of Tu Fu's arrival in 760. Here are two of Wang Wei's brief and vividly pictorial Wang-ch'uan poems.

NORTH HILL

North Hill north of the lake
Red balcony bright among the various trees
Twisting winding the river to the south
Gleaming vanishing by the edge of the green woods

MAGNOLIA SLOPE

Lotus flowers on branches' tips
Send vermilion through the hills
—The valley house deserted, no one there—
Everywhere everywhere they are flowering and falling⁶⁷

Undoubtedly, Wang Wei's most famous painting was the panorama of the Wang-ch'uan. Chang Yen-yüan records that "with a masculine boldness of brush" Wang Wei painted a panorama of the Wang-ch'uan on the walls of the Ch'ing-yüan Ssu, a part of his villa which he had converted into a Buddhist temple after his mother died. Chu Ching-hsüan says that in his picture "mountains and valleys, close-crowded, turned this way and that while clouds and water streamed by. His conceptions left the dusty, everyday world behind, and marvels grew from his brush-tip"—praise so conventional that one wonders if he ever saw the picture. Before the destruction of the temples in 845, according to Chang Huai-kuan, a screen with a painting of the Wang-ch'uan had stood in the West Pagoda Precinct of Ch'ien-fu Ssu in Ch'ang-an.⁶⁸

The original, or originals, all seem to have disappeared by the Northern Sung period. Mi Fu mentions a close copy that he had seen in a collector's hands of the "small Wang-ch'uan," presumably a handscroll, in which the figures were very well done.⁶⁹ The section on Wang Wei in the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* notes that "among all his works it was the painting of the Wang-ch'uan that filled his mind."⁷⁰ Wang Wei probably painted the Wang-ch'uan many times, for with its varied scenery, its hills and streams, lakeside pavilions, cottages, and bamboo grooves, it was a world in miniature, able to furnish him with an inexhaustible supply of themes. In the tenth century the landscapist Kuo Chung-shu painted a version of the Wang-ch'uan (whether based on an original of Wang Wei's we do not know) which became the basis of many later versions, notably that which was engraved on a series of stone tablets at Lan-t'ien in the Ming Dynasty as

a sort of memorial to the master.⁷¹ Rubbings from these stones, which may have been recut several times, reproduce a view of gentle hills and a winding river, along which the various houses, fields, and gardens are clearly shown, often set off by encircling hills in a manner truly archaic. Of these engraved landscapes Sirén wrote: "Everything is put down with an accuracy based on close observation of nature and reflecting a kind of intimacy that must have been inspired by a deep attachment to the place." Would that it were so! Each scene is carefully labelled, and the end product may not reproduce Wang Wei's painting at all but simply translate faithfully into visible and somewhat archaic form the scenes as Wang Wei described them in the *Wang-ch'uan Chi*. Beyond this there is little one can say about the engravings, which made liberal use of the texture strokes typical of Ming literary painting (plate 96).

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang in the *Hua-yen* insists that it was Wang Wei who first used texture strokes in his landscapes. "From Wang Wei onwards the painters started to use wrinkles (*ts'un-fa*) and the flowing ink (or tinted wash) method (*hsüan-jan-fa*). He changed the manner of Chung Yu" (a great calligrapher of the Three Kingdoms period).⁷² Not only is this highly doubtful on historical grounds, but Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's remarks on paintings he had seen that are attributed to Wang Wei are not altogether consistent. He speaks of having seen a *Snow on the River* in Hsiang Yüan-pien's collection, which he thought close to Wang Wei, and which had no *ts'un* but only contours (compare plate 97), and a copy of Kuo Chung-shu's version of the Wang-ch'uan scroll which had a lot of fine texture-strokes but "was a common thing and not sufficient to enable me to form an opinion about his style of painting."⁷³ Subsequent versions of the Wang-ch'uan scroll, of which there are many, have been formed from a variety of elements: for instance, impressions (chiefly false) of the archaic style of the T'ang Dynasty; the descriptions in Wang Wei's well-known poems; the Ming engraved stones (which may themselves have been based on earlier wood-engravings purporting to preserve Kuo Chung-shu's composition); and Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's immensely influential and yet largely unfounded description of Wang Wei's style. A detailed analysis of the surviving late versions, therefore, while interesting in itself, would scarcely increase our understanding of T'ang landscape painting. On the contrary, it would confuse us. Their importance is rather as illustrations of the Chinese attitude to tradition. A great masterpiece is kept alive, as it were, not just by being preserved in the original, but—and often solely—by being continually reborn in new versions by successive generations of artists. Some may be pedestrian, others profoundly original: the first at least preserve the composition and content, the second reanimate it.

Examples of the more academic version of the Wang-ch'uan scroll are common: among them are scrolls formerly in the collections of Professors Kobayashi in Tōkyō and Kaizuka in Kyōtō, which Sirén considers may be late Sung, and which "attempt to suggest by gradations of light and shade an enveloping atmosphere and something of an aerial perspective."⁷⁴ The scroll in the Seattle Art Museum is more complete but less atmospheric.⁷⁵ There are two later versions in the Freer Gallery and one in the British Museum,⁷⁶ and a delightful scroll in the Museum of East Asian Art in Cologne, probably of late Ming date, and bearing the signature of Kuo Chung-shu.⁷⁷

Versions of the reanimating kind are fewer but much more interesting. Of these, none suggest the power of the Chinese literary painter to reinterpret, and so revivify, this hallowed composition more brilliantly than does the scroll by Wang Yüan-ch'ü in the Earl Morse Collection (Princeton University Art Museum), of which a detail is illustrated in plate 101. Wang Yüan-ch'ü explains in his inscription, dated 1711, that it is based on a set of the stone rubbings which he had recently acquired.

Chu Ching-hsüan mentions the Wang-ch'üan scroll as if by hearsay only, but he probably did see the two-panel screen by Wang Wei with a painting of green maples, which in his time was still in the Western Pagoda Precinct of Ch'ien-fu Ssu in Ch'ang-an. This curiously is not listed by Chang Yen-yüan in his detailed inventory of the pictures in that temple, although it is mentioned in the *Hua-tuan*, cited above. Both authors, however, list the paintings Wang Wei executed, in company with Pi Hung and Cheng Ch'ien, in the "first precinct from the north off the eastern cloister corridor of the main hall" of Tz'u-en Ssu, Hsüan-tsang's temple in Ch'ang-an. Chang Yen-yüan says that they were in plain line (*pai hua*); Chu says that each artist painted one small wall-panel and that in their time they were considered three unique works. But there is nothing to show whether or not Wang Wei's contribution was a landscape.

A number of Wang Wei's compositions survived into the Sung Dynasty and found their way into Hui-tsung's collection.⁷⁸ Few, if any, could have been originals. There were four scrolls depicting the scenery on the road to Szechwan, one of the *Four Greyheads*, one a *Travelling amid Mountains and Valleys*.

There survive versions of two river scenes under snow, a subject that Wang Wei never seems to have tired of painting. The *Chiang-shan hsieh-chi t'u* (Clearing after Snowfall among Mountains and Rivers) is not mentioned in Chinese records before the latter part of the Ming. Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang writes of seeing it in the collection of a certain Feng Kung-shu, and says that it had been hidden in a lacquered bamboo tube for a long time and had only recently been discovered. Two versions of this exist today, both formerly belonging to Lo Chen-yü; one, with colophons by Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang and Feng Kung-shu (presumably the one that Tung refers to in the *Hua-yen*), was formerly owned by Professor Ogawa of Tokyo: "the best preserved parts of it," Sirén notes, "give the impression of a work executed before the Sung period." Judging from reproductions (plate 97) this seems a rather overoptimistic estimate. The picture has an ancient air that is quaint rather than truly archaic. The brushwork is rather giggling and fussy, while a deliberately naive effect is sought by falsifying the scale, as, for example, between the houses, trees, and human figures on the left of the section reproduced. Chu Ching-hsüan said that Wang Wei's landscapes and pines and rocks were "highly individual in their flavour and personal tone." Chang Yen-yüan said of him that "he will spread out his hues across the plains and bring to life distant trees, and the harder he strives for delicacy and cunning, the more he loses contact with actuality, but he is too blunt and awkward. He depicted the Wang River with a masculine boldness of brush . . . I have seen a *p'o mo* landscape by him in which the brushstrokes were vigorous and lively." Later, Kuo Jo-hsü said of Tung Yüan that "he had a wet ink (*shui mo*)

manner that was like Wang Wei's," and elsewhere in the same book that Wang's brushstrokes were "courtly and virile." None of these qualities of brushwork comes through in the Ogawa scroll, although the composition, with its stiffly isolated components, does suggest a possible inspiration in a T'ang original.⁷⁹

The only hint of Wang Wei's archaism in the early literature is the remark of Chang Yen-yüan that his style "bridged the antique and the modern." But this is ambiguous, if it means anything at all: every great painter has done that. More interesting is Chang's use of the phrase *pu se* "to spread out colours." Not only does this contradict the traditional view that he was the founder of landscape painting in monochrome ink, for which there is not a shred of evidence in any T'ang Dynasty source, but it also suggests a technique of painting in broad washes of colour such as we find in mid and late T'ang frescoes at Tunhuang and in early Japanese landscape painting.

There is hardly anything in the Ogawa scroll that would tempt us to connect it with Wang Wei. The needle-sharp line and the use of gold and mineral colours suggest a later pastiche of the T'ang courtly style, the drawing is finicky without being precise, and archaic conventions are absurdly exaggerated. The version in Honolulu makes less attempt to capture the T'ang technique, but is perhaps closer to Wang Wei (plates 98, 99). Archaisms survive, but are partly refined out. The detailed overlapping in the rocks along the riverbank is subordinated, while there is a more natural range in scale from the larger trees to the clumps of bamboo beside the cottages. So, while far removed from the T'ang in point of technique, this painting seems to be from the hand of a Ming artist of some poetic sensibility, and it brings us rather nearer to what Wang Wei stood for in the eyes of the literati. Perhaps, as Yonezawa has suggested, it is based on a Northern Sung copy.⁸⁰

The picture—judging from reproductions—which most convincingly suggests the spirit and perhaps even something of the style of Wang Wei is the *River under Snow*, Hsüeh-chi 'ü, which was once in the Manchu Household collection and has since disappeared (plate 100). It depicts a river bank in deep winter. In the foreground a bridge leads to an open space with cottages in which men are sheltering from the cold, and seem to be drinking tea or wine. Two or three figures move silently over the snow, while a covered boat glides across the water from the cottages in the upper left corner. The picture seems to be painted in ink and colours, including mineral white, on silk. There is an inscription by Ch'ien-lung in the upper right corner; another, reading *Wang Wei hsüeh-chi 'ü*, in what purports to be the hand of Sung Hui-tsung, is on a strip of silk attached on the right. Sirén considers that it may have been transferred from another picture. There is an inscription by Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang on the mount above.

It would be unwise to make more than general comments on this lost painting on the basis of a photograph. It may be part of a larger picture. The composition, however, seems complete in itself and does not look like a fragment cut from a handscroll, although it was probably trimmed a little along the top border. It might have been a small hanging scroll, although this would have been something of a novelty in the eighth century, or a panel from a screen. Likewise, little can be

said about the quality of the brushwork, especially as there appear to be signs of repainting in the bridge and houses. But in two aspects this picture seems to be relevant to a discussion of Wang Wei: one concerns technique, the other—more intangibly—feeling. The landscape is set down in long, undulating contours formed with broad washes. Less easy to define, but still present (unless the photograph is grossly deceptive), is an intensity of poetic feeling unmatched in any other early Chinese landscape painting. Winter has descended upon the riverside; rocks and roofs, near slopes and distant banks, are softened and united under their blanket of snow, and the silence of a sunless afternoon can almost be felt. Here the painter has gone beyond the forms, and one feels, for the first time, that the means at his command are sufficient for the expression of true poetic feeling. Just where this little picture belongs in the history of Chinese art it is impossible to say. It may be a late T'ang or tenth-century work, or of even later date, and the attribution to Wang Wei has, in any case, no foundation. Yet of all the known pictures to which his name has been attached, this one seems in certain essential respects to bring us closest to him.

YOUNGER CONTEMPORARIES OF WANG WEI

Who were Wang Wei's pupils? From whom did he learn the art? On the latter point history is strangely silent, as if to suggest that his talent was something more than human; and of his stylistic influence on his contemporaries and on late T'ang painters we are told nothing at all. The tradition that he founded a school of landscape painting began with Su Tung-p'o in the eleventh century and reached its culmination in the writings of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang nearly nine hundred years later. There is not a word in any T'ang source to suggest that this was the case. Yet there is no doubt that Wang Wei was a member of a class of scholar painters whose way of life and style of painting can, even at this distance, be broadly distinguished from that of what one might call the craftsman painter, and that these gentlemen artists influenced and stimulated each other.

Chang Yin, an official and a noted calligrapher, was one of the amateur painters who may have felt his influence. He was, with Wang Wei, the poet Li Ch'i, and others, one of the Friends of Poetry, Wine, and Painting (*Shih chin tan-ch'ing chih yn*).⁸¹ Graduating in 725, six years after Wang Wei, he remained an active painter into the reign of Tai-tsung (763–780). Wang wrote a couplet about his draft script on a screen; Li Ch'i composed a quatrain on Wang's painting of pear blossoms on a wall. Little else is known about him as a landscape painter, except that his *Excursion in the Mountains in Springtime* was in the collection of Chia Ssu-tao in the Sung Dynasty.⁸²

Possibly Wang Wei also influenced his friend Pi Hung, who rose to be president of the Crown Prince's secretariat.⁸³ Pi Hung did wall-paintings, in company with Wang Wei, in Tz'u-en Ssu, and painted pines and rocks on the walls of a government office in the north cloister corridor of Ch'ien-fu Ssu. Tu Fu wrote a moving poem on a painting of pine trees by Wei Yen which opens with these lines:

How few people in the world can paint old pinetrees?
Pi Hung is already old, Wei Yen still young. . .

And Chang Yen-yüan records that Pi Hung's trees and rocks were still highly regarded in Chang's time; he compares his pine trees with those of Liu Shang, a follower of Chang Tsao discussed below. A few of Pi Hung's works survived into the Sung Dynasty. There was a painting of rocks and pines in Hui-tsung's collection,⁸⁴ and Mi Fu noted having seen a "strangely archaic" landscape of his in the collection of the Soochow official and poet Su Shun-ch'ün (1008-1048), carrying an inscription, perhaps by the collector: "the free movement of his brush is daring and hazardous."⁸⁵

CHANG TSAO

In the history of Chinese landscape painting, the earliest name of major importance that comes to the mind of the student, Chinese or Western, is probably that of Wang Wei. So clear an image does he present, indeed, that it is often forgotten that in the T'ang Dynasty he was not regarded as exceptional, and that his enormous reputation is almost entirely the creation of scholarly critics and historians of the Sung Dynasty and later.⁸⁶ If one could transport oneself back to Ch'ang-an in about the year 800 and ask one's connoisseur friends who was the greatest landscape painter of recent times, the name that would most likely spring to their lips would not be that of Wang Wei, however, but that of Chang Tsao.

Nothing is known about Chang Tsao's early life. His personal name was T'ung, or Wen-t'ung.⁸⁷ He was a man of Wu-hsing in Kiangsu, home of many distinguished artists down the centuries, but whether he was actually born there is uncertain. His southern ancestry, however, might help to account for his free style and his unconventional attitude towards landscape painting. He must have been in Ch'ang-an in the winter of 755-756, if a ninth-century miscellany on events in the reign of the Emperor Hsüan-tsung (713-756) is correct in saying that he was caught there during the An Lu-shan Rebellion with Wang Wei and Cheng Ch'ien and held with them for a time under house arrest in the former mansion of Yang Kuei-fei's brother Yang Kuo-chung.⁸⁸ To have been in the company of these two great elderly poet painters suggests that his position among the elite must by that time have been well established.

Chang Tsao was a friend and protégé of Wang Wei's influential brother Wang Chin, who recommended that he be appointed Honorary Auxiliary Secretary in the Bureau of Sacrifices and Yen-t'ieh p'an-kuan (Judge? in the administration of the Salt and Iron Monopoly). Chang Yen-yüan says that as a result of a conviction he was demoted to Marshal (ssu-ma) in Heng-chou in Honan, then transferred to a similar post in Chung-chou in Szechwan. It is not certain when this happened, for according to Chang he was in Ch'ang-an during the rebellion of 783 and had to flee for his life. Alexander Soper has interpreted the texts as implying that he ended his life in exile,⁸⁹ but the order of events is not certain. All that can be said is that he appears to have been an established artist in 755 and was still active in 783. Where and when he died is not known.

Chu Ching-hsüan calls him "a gentleman and a writer." What purports to be the preface of his *Hui-ching* (The Realm of Painting) is preserved in the early Ming painter Wang Fu's

miscellany, *Shu-hua chuan hsi-lu*, but it is of questionable authenticity.⁹⁰ Had it survived, the *Hui-ching* might have been an extremely interesting source on early Chinese landscape painting, for Chang Tsao was remarkable both as a personality and as a painter. This account by the Szechwanese T'ang poet and recluse Fu Tsai gives us an impression of the sort of man he was:

When it comes to painting, Chang Tsao embraced all within himself and was without rival in the world. Only for those high officials who genuinely and sincerely desired his work would he paint. He would go to enormous trouble in his carefully weighed and measured work. His paintings were offered as gifts into the homes of the nobility, and other people could not lie and pretend they had seen his work. In no time at all, he was demoted to the post of Marshal of Wu-ling commandery. He had no official work there, and plenty of leisure time. So the local gentry were able bit by bit to acquire his paintings.

A gentleman of Hsing-chou spread a feast in his house. The deep porch was richly decorated, the wine cups and food dishes were fine. In the courtyard there were bamboos scattered in the sunlight—a delightful scene. The master, spoiled with the generous gifts of Heaven, suddenly appeared at the party, roughly demanding fresh silk to display his extraordinary art. The host gathered his robes about him, got to his feet and answered him with a shout. On that occasion there were twenty-four guests, seated to left and right, who heard this (encounter). They all stood up and stared at Chang Tsao. Right in the middle of the room he sat down with his legs spread out, took a deep breath, and his inspiration began to issue forth. Those present were as startled as if lightning were shooting across the heavens or a whirlwind sweeping up into the sky. Ravaging and pulling, spreading in all directions, the ink seemed to be spitting from his flying brush. He clapped his hands with a cracking sound. Dividing and drawing together, suddenly strange shapes were born. When he had finished, there stood pine trees, scaly and riven, crags steep and precipitous, clear water and turbulent clouds. He threw down his brush, got up, and looked around in every direction. It seemed as if the sky had cleared after a storm, to reveal the true essence of ten thousand things.

When we contemplate Master Chang's art, it is not painting, it is the very Tao itself. Whenever he was engaged in painting, one already knew that he had left mere skill far behind. His ideas reach into the dark mysteries of things, and for him, things lay not in the physical senses, but in the spiritual part of his mind. And thus he was able to grasp them in his heart, and make his hand accord with it.⁹¹

Among Chang Tsao's friends and admirers was the poet Po Chü-i, who wrote a "Hua-chi" which is an encomium on his extraordinary gifts but says little of substance.⁹² Po Chü-i speaks of his heavenly endowment, his apparently effortless performance, how there were no flora or fauna, no effects of scale or recession, that he could not render. His work was like that of Creation itself, and what he grasped in his mind he transmitted through his hand.

The poet Yüan Chen (799-831) expressed the same sort of feeling about Chang Tsao in his poem on a painting of pine trees:

When Chang Tsao painted old pine trees,
He always grasped their true spirit and form;
His green needles sweep like brooms in the spring wind,
Among the master painters of today

Such extraordinary effects are nowhere to be found:
 Their thin branches do not have this freedom,
 Their stubborn trunks merely stand up straight and stiff.
 Now I realise that it is hard for people with dusty minds
 To depict the essence of clouds and mists;
 So I will go to Che-yang-shan,
 And there, deep in the mountains, I will see the real thing.⁹³

Chang Tsao's landscapes were already much sought after in his lifetime. Chu Ching-hsüan said that in his own time there were many of Chang's screens in private collections, that he could ask any price he liked, and that even fragments or unfinished paintings were in demand. Chang Tsao had been a frequent visitor at Chang Yen-yüan's house in the latter's grandfather's time and, Chang writes,

as a result, there are many of his paintings in my home. Once they commissioned him to paint eight screen panels of landscape scenes. This was at the P'ing-yüan block in Ch'ang-an. But before he had finished with the ink-breaking (*p'o-mo*)⁹⁴ the rebellion of Chu Tz'u (783 A.D.) broke out and the capital was thrown into turmoil and disorder. Tsao lost no time in running away, and when people of the household saw his paintings still on the stretchers, they hurriedly took them down.⁹⁵

Chang Yen-yüan tells the sad story of Li Yo, auxiliary secretary in the Board of War and an intimate friend of his grandfather's, who was a passionate lover of painting and longed to buy some panels of rocks and cedars by Chang Tsao that he had heard were in a certain gentleman's collection. But he found to his horror that the young wife had boiled most of the rolls of silk (presumably to get the ink out) to make linings for dresses, and all he got were two strips with two cedar trees and one rock.⁹⁶ He sighed and lamented over this for a long time, and composed a *Hui-lien chi*, Record of the Boiled Paintings. "Although this goes very deeply into Chang Tsao's idea about painting," Chang Yen-yüan regrettably concludes, "I am not including it here."

That Chang Tsao's style of painting was striking indeed must be evident from the foregoing. Not even copies of his work survive today, but it is possible to obtain an impression of his style and technique from early writings. He was most skilled in the painting of trees, particularly pine trees. Chang Yen-yüan relates that Pi Hung, senior president of the Grand Secretariat of the Heir Apparent, had commanded the greatest fame in his time. But when once he saw one of Chang Tsao's paintings, he was greatly surprised to see that the master only used stumpy brushes or his bare hand to spread the ink on the silk. So he asked Tsao from whom he had learned to do this. Tsao replied: "Outwardly nature has been my teacher; but inwardly I follow the springs of inspiration in my own heart." At this, we are told, Pi Hung laid down his brush.

Considering how intimate Chang Yen-yüan's family had been with Chang Tsao and how well he knew the painter's work, he has disappointingly little to say about Chang Tsao's landscape technique. In his chapter of the *Ming-hua chi* on the painting of mountains and water, trees and rocks, he writes: "The representation of trees and rocks became (really) subtle with Wei

Yen, and Chang T'ung exhausted its possibilities. T'ung could work with a purple tipped brush with a blunt point, and he rubbed on the colours with the palm of his hand."⁹⁷ In his work, Chang goes on, are ingenious decorative effects, yet outwardly they seem to be carelessly done.

Chu Ching-hsüan, on the other hand, gives so vivid a picture of Chang Tsao's style that these lost masterpieces almost appear before our eyes:

He painted pines and rocks and landscapes that were highly prized in their day. It was only in pine trees, however, that he surpassed all others, of any period. His brushwork was handled dextrously; once he took two brushes in his hands and used them simultaneously to draw two branches, one alive and one dead. The spirit of the tree seemed contemptuous of mist and haze; its forcefulness defied wind and rain. The tangled confusion, the scaly roughness of the forms had grown under his hand as though his thoughts had moved, with the greatest freedom. The live branch was lush and charged with the moist richness of spring; the dead one was forlorn and autumnal.

His landscapes were rendered so as to give a luxuriant beauty to both heights and lowlands, and to superimpose depth on depth within the space of an inch or two. His rocks were so pointed that they seemed ready to topple over; his springs gushed out as if with a roar. His foregrounds gave the impression of pressing against one like a barrier; his far distances seemed to reach to the very limits of the sky.⁹⁸

Chu records that Chang executed landscapes in Pao-ying Ssu in Ch'ang-an, remarking that "the exquisite cunning of his work warrants his being placed in the inspired class." Chang Yen-yüan also mentions landscapes by him on the walls of Chien-fu Ssu and Pao-ying Ssu, the latter with an inscription by the artist.⁹⁹ Even allowing for the extravagance of Chu Ching-hsüan's account, Chang Tsao must have been a remarkable painter: his forceful, brilliant effects with the brush, his revolutionary techniques, his richness of texture, his mastery of tone and depth, his ability to infuse his pine trees with life, all suggest a painter comparable, in his chosen field, to Wu Tao-tzu in his.

To the information which he derives from Chu and Chang, Kuo Ju-hsü adds this comment on his style: "He would set the luxuriance of boughs in full leaf against the contorted turning of an old mulberry; both would have their full measure of design and would be high in *ch'i-yün* [spirit consonance]. It was in that that he was exceptional."¹⁰⁰ Kuo also mentions a painting of his of trees and rocks in Ching-yü Ssu in Ch'ang-an as though he had seen it: "Full of peril and weirdness."

By the Sung Dynasty, Chang Tsao was already becoming something of a legend. Few of his paintings seem to have survived until that time, perhaps because so many of them were standing screens, the most easily damaged and destroyed of all formats in Chinese painting, whereas hanging scrolls and handscrolls were rolled up and could be kept for many years in good condition. Moreover, by the eleventh century screen painting as an activity of the great masters was going out of fashion—Kuo Hsi was one of the last of its distinguished exponents—and progressively fewer major painters (as opposed to decorators) would have looked back to Chang

Tsao as a model. Most of Kuo Jo-hsiü's information about him is taken from T'ang sources. The painter and connoisseur Mi Fu (1051-1107) noted having seen a painting of his, *Flowing Water, Torrents, and Pinetrees*, which had a poem in the upper part in the *pa-fen* style of calligraphy, and a matching verse by Chang Tsao himself.¹⁰¹ He also mentioned paintings of pines, and of pines and bamboos in a mountain gorge, in the hands of private collectors. The collection of the Emperor Hui-tsung (1101-1125) included several pictures ascribed to Chang Tsao: two scrolls of *Pines and Rocks*, two of *Winter Forests*, and one of a *Recluse amid Pines and Bamboos*.¹⁰² T'ang Hou in his *Hua-chien* (circa 1320-1330) says that he had seen excellent paintings of Chang Tsao's some time previously, and lately he had acquired his *Gathering to Play the Zither in a Mountain Pavilion*, which the Yüan scholar painter Chao Meng-fu (1254-1322) coveted, but which he would not part with. Chao Meng-fu wrote a colophon for it which ran: "Chang Tsao's pines have become very rare. In his scroll the deep level distances are subtly handled, as if one were walking along a shady path in the mountains. It is indeed a precious painting."¹⁰³ Ching Hao, after speaking in the *Pi-fa-chi* of the new method of painting in broken ink washes that had developed in the T'ang period, writes of Chang Tsao: "His trees and rocks are full of spirit consonance (*ch'i-yüan*); his ink and brush are richly detailed; the thoughts he expresses are true and lofty; he attaches no importance to the five colours; indeed, there is nothing in ancient or modern times that can compare with him."¹⁰⁴

Considering how much Chang Tsao was admired by those who actually saw his paintings, his legacy is surprisingly small. A few titles of paintings attributed to him are mentioned in the catalogues of Ming collections.¹⁰⁵ None of his works, or even copies of them, appear to have been in the vast collection of the Emperor Ch'ien-lung (1736-1796). A sure sign of his total eclipse in recent centuries by the brilliance of Wang Wei's reputation is the fact that no Ming or Ch'ing painter, so far as I know, ever claimed that he was working in his manner. The man who was the foremost landscapist of his day, and perhaps of the whole of the T'ang Dynasty, had become, like his predecessor Lu T'an-wei, no more than a name in the literature of Chinese painting. Yet it was Chang Tsao more than any other single T'ang painter who prepared the way both for the classic, monumental northern landscape, from Ching Hao and Li Ch'eng to Kuo Hsi, and for the broad effects and free handling of ink adopted by the southern masters Tung Yüan and Chü-jan.

LESSER SOUTHERN MASTERS

Chang Tsao's most distinguished pupil was probably Liu Shang, a southern official and amateur painter who, Chang Yen-yüan says, "began by modelling himself on Chang Tsao but later decided to create truth in his own way."¹⁰⁶ Yet he remained devoted to the master, and penned these lines when Chang was sent away from Ch'ang-an:

Green, green the mossy stones
overlooking the arroyo,

Curling, swirling the valley wind—
 shaking the pine branches.
 So far in this world
 I have only met Chang T'ung
 Since he has left for Heng-yang
 how can I know him further?¹⁰⁷

Liu Shang was the ideal type of the scholarly recluse. The Preface to his collected poems says: "In his later years he retired to Hu-fu-chih at I-hsing; people would go so far as to cross over the Lake Huai taking paper and ink with them to get him to paint for them; and if they got so much as one pine or one rock, a wisp of cloud or a single crane, they would treasure it as something especially precious."¹⁰⁸ Chu Ching-hsüan says that he was also a good bamboo painter. In a poem that Liu Shang composed for his painting *Pine and Rock*, he says that he did a painting of a pine under a cliff in *shui-mo*—"water-ink," or ink wash.¹⁰⁹ This may be the earliest known reference to the technique that was to be one of the key achievements of T'ang landscape painting (this is not to say, of course, that it began with Liu Shang).

Among these southern masters, who are a good deal more interesting than their northern predecessors, was Chang Chih-ho, a native of Kuei-chi (Chin-hua) in Chekiang.¹¹⁰ An intellectual prodigy, Chang was given a post in the imperial bodyguard by Su-tsung (756-763) but seems to have retired early and to have spent much of his life on and around Tung-t'ing Lake, where he became known as the "mist and waves fisherman" who never baited his hook, and "loved wine and poetry." Early in his career the great calligrapher Yen Chen-ch'ing, who at the time was governor of Wu-hsing, offered Chang a home, but he refused it. In Yen's collected writings is a description of Chang painting when drunk, with his eyes closed or facing away from the picture, making his brush dance and the ink fly in time to music. The *Ming-hua lu* records that Yen sent him five "fishermen's poems" in recognition of the nobility of his character: "Chang Chih-ho thereupon did a handscroll to accompany the verses. He showed human figures, boats, birds and beasts, mist and waves, wind and moon all in accordance with the text and rendered so as to bring out their subtleties to the full. So profound was its mastery of poses that it became the standard of elegance for its period." It is hard to imagine these pictures, but perhaps in their combination of individuality and detail they were to T'ang painting what Ma Ho-chih's illustrations to the *Odes* were to Southern Sung. As an interpreter of the misty tree-clad hills and lakes of central China, Chang Chih-ho takes his place as a precursor of Tung Yüan; but his wilder flights with the brush caused Chu Ching-hsüan to place him in the class of painters who were above all rules, the *i-p'in*, about which more will be said later. His painting was evidently too unconventional for Hui-tsung, who had none of his pictures in his collection.

A slightly younger contemporary of Chang Chih-ho in Wu-hsing was Chu Shen, who became well known in the Chien-chung era (780-784) for his landscapes.

"All the way from the Yangtze River and the lakes up to the capital," Chu Ching-hsüan writes, "there were families that treasured his wall-paintings, screens and scrolls . . . His rendering of precipitous ridges, and the subtlety of his successive distances; the limpidness of his lake tones, and

the splintery look of his rock markings; the peaks that towered upward under his brush, and the clouds that mounted from its tip; the ravines and sombre depths that he set within an inch or two; his intermingling of pines and bamboo groves, and the gloom or pallor of his clouds and rain; all these, though they may have been invented by his predecessors, were made by Chu into models for later generations. This is why he belongs in the top grade of the excellent class, though in secular figures, bamboos, and trees he is relegated to the competent class."¹¹¹

Chang Yen-yüan is less expansive, but his verdict is the same. He speaks of Chu's "rich elegance," and notes that "his depths were imposing, and his awe-inspiring blacks manifold. His rapids rushed towards you, while his level distances [*p'ing yüan*: Soper, 'far distances'] carried as far as the eye could reach."

Two points emerge from these accounts: first, the phrase *shih-wen ssu lich* (literally, rock markings as though split) suggests a vocabulary of texture strokes significantly richer than that of Wang Wei, and a technique perhaps close to that of the landscape in the Nelson Gallery (plates 106–109). Second, this is the first time we are told of a painter whose reputation spread up from the south, as distinct from a southerner who made his reputation in the capital. This reinforces the view, suggested by much other evidence, that the Chekiang-Kiangsu area was now becoming the centre from which artistic influences were once more radiating outwards.

Yang Kung-nan (Yang Yen) was a statesman and amateur painter whose official career, in which he rose to be a minister of state, spanned the last quarter of the eighth century.¹¹² His family came from T'ien-hsing in present-day Shensi Province, but Chang Yen-yüan calls him a man of Hua-yin, hence a southerner. Owing to the machinations of a jealous rival he was banished at the height of his career to the extreme south, but died, or committed suicide, at the age of fifty-five before he reached his destination.¹¹³ As a landscape painter, he was at no man's command. Chu Ching-hsüan relates that when a powerful minister who had aided his family asked, with much hesitation, for a painting, it was a month before he could bring himself to execute a screen "on which," Chu says, "pines, rocks and cloud emanations were astir with the creative power of nature."¹¹⁴ Chang also praises his originality, adding: "The character of his appearance was refined and elegant." Elsewhere he remarks that Yang was famous for his beard and eyebrows—"and the emotions of his spirit (*shen-ch'ing*) transcendent in their liveliness. He was good at landscapes, which were lofty and rare, elegant and rich . . . I have seen a landscape by him and from it I believe I can see that he must have been a man imposing in stature and appearance, yet free and easy in manner."¹¹⁵ He sounds a delightful man. This is one of the first recorded expressions of the view that a painter's character is revealed in his paintings and is inseparable from their value as works of art—a view that became central to the philosophy of the *wen-jen-lun* from the time of Su Tung-p'o onwards.

SOUTHERN EXPRESSIONISTS AND ECCENTRICS

There were probably southern eccentrics in the first half of the T'ang, for there was a tradition of southern eccentricity going back to Ku K'ai-chih. But we do not hear of them till after the

debacle of 756; one of the first was Ku K'uang, a native of Wu-hsing who, Chang Yen-yüan wryly comments, "did not cultivate firmness of character."¹¹⁶ He held a variety of middle-rank posts in the southeast and was demoted in 789 to a minor position in Kiangsi, after which he retired to live out his long life on Mao-shan in Kiangsu. Chang notes that he wrote a *Hua-p'ing* (Critique of Painting), which is now lost. Apart from this, the chief early sources barely mention him as a painter at all, though he had some reputation as a scholar and a poet.

A later eighth-century author, Feng Yen, mentions a certain Mr. Ku who lived a wandering life in the Ta-li era (766-780), lodging in houses of the aristocracy, where he was in demand as a landscapist. The remarkable performances with which he entertained his hosts are described by the scholarly Feng Yen in his miscellany, *Record of Things Heard and Seen by Mr. Feng*:

In the Ta-li era there was a master from Wu named Ku who had the entrée into the mansions of the nobility because of his reputation as a landscape painter. Whenever he painted, he would first spread out several dozen strips of silk over the floor, then he would grind the ink and mix his colours, and set them ready in separate pots. He would then have a number of men give ten or more blasts on the horn, take the ink, and pour it over the silk. Next he would pour on the colours. Then, taking a long kerchief or turban, he would place it over the parts where he had spilled the ink, have someone sit on it, grasp hold of one end, and drag it round and round in circles. After he had dragged it all over, he would once more take brush and ink and, following the forms thus produced, transform them into the shapes of mountains and islands. Now painting is a tranquil and elegant affair; but Mr. Ku closes his eyes and makes a noise like someone fighting with a halberd. How could he be called a master of the art of painting?¹¹⁷

It has been suggested that the exhibitionist Mr. Ku was Ku K'uang himself. It is hard to believe that K'uang, in the midst of an official career and nine or more years before his disgrace, could have stooped to supporting himself by such means, though it is of course not impossible. The section on the eccentric Wang Mo in the *Ming-hua chi* says that a certain Ku was his pupil; this was probably the same man. If on the other hand it were the distinguished poet Ku K'uang, Chang Yen-yüan would almost certainly have referred to him by name.

Mr. Ku may have got his wild ideas from the painter Wang Mo (Ink Wang), or Wang Hsia. Nothing is known of Ink Wang's origins; but presumably he was a southerner, for we read in the *Ming-hua chi* that he modelled himself on Hsiang Jung—who, there is reason to think, was a native of Kiangsu—and that as a young man in T'ai-chou in Kiangsu he learned to use the brush from no less than the scholar poet Cheng Ch'ien.¹¹⁸ When Ku K'uang was director of the Chih-hsin-t'ing (perhaps the coast guard), Chang Yen-yüan writes, "Wang Mo requested a post in the coastal patrol. When he was asked what his purpose was, he said, 'I want to observe the landscapes of the sea' [a literal translation of the phrase *hai-chung shan-shui*; perhaps he meant merely the seacoast]. But he only held the post for half a year and resigned. After that his brushwork became wonderfully expressive, and Master Ku became his pupil." Wang Mo loved the bottle; and, according to Chang, he was good at painting landscapes, pine, and rocks. When he was drunk he would dip his hair in the ink and paint by butting his head against the silk. He

died at the end of the Chen-yüan era (785–805) in Jun-chou in Kiangsu. "When they lifted his coffin it seemed as if it were empty; everyone said at the time that he must have become a spirit." Chang says that he got his information from his cousin Hou, who knew Wang Mo well; but surprisingly he adds, "I don't consider Mo's painting anything very special." Indeed, Chang considered his paintings "wanting in the lofty and rare," that is, not in the best of taste; but he adds that they still had a vogue in his time.

Chu Ching-hsüan's description of Wang Mo's technique is more vivid and interesting. Whether it is based on hearsay, or whether as a young man he actually saw one of these performances, we are not told. After noting that Wang Mo spent much of his life in wandering among the rivers and lakes of the south, Chu writes:

There was a good deal of wildness in him, and he loved wine. When he was ready to paint a hanging picture he usually began by drinking. When he was drunk, he would spatter ink on it, laughing and singing all the while. He would kick at it, smear it with his hands, sweep his brush about or scrub with it, here with pale ink there with dark. Then he would follow the configurations thus achieved, to make mountains or rocks, or clouds or water.

The response of hand to thought was as swift as creation itself. He would bring out clouds and mist by his drawing, or create wind and rain with his washes, with a godlike cunning. One can look closely and see no trace of the ink blots, a fact that everyone finds most remarkable.¹¹⁹

The compilers of the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* more or less repeat this account, noting that his contemporaries called him Wang P'o-mo, Wang the Ink Flinger.¹²⁰ Two of his pictures were in Hui-tsung's collection: one of a Han recluse, *Yen Kuang Fishing*, the other *Stately Pines*. To have been acceptable to Hui-tsung, these must have been untypically conservative in technique, particularly when we consider that the Emperor found even Kuo Hsi's work unpalatable.

We owe to the poet painter Ku K'uang what seems to be the only surviving reference, quoted in Chapter III, to an obscure painter named Fan Shan-jen, whose landscapes seem to have had the power of transporting the viewer beyond the bounds of the picture itself.¹²¹

MONK PAINTERS

Fan Shan-jen sounds, from his name, like a Taoist recluse. In view of the important part that monk painters played later in the more expressionistic and philosophical tradition of landscape painting, it is noteworthy that Chang Yen-yüan mentions at the end of his book a group of landscape painters who were, or became, Buddhist or Taoist monks; he had direct knowledge of the work of several of them.¹²² None of them seems to be mentioned in any other early sources, and none seems to have practised the outlandish techniques I have just been describing. Hou-mo Ch'en-hsia, for example, "excelled in fine and close work." Chang also mentions Cheng T'ing, a man of "delicate taste," Liang Hsia, Hsiang Jung, and Wu T'ien. Wu T'ien wrote a *Hua shan-shui lu*, now lost, in which he recorded and discussed the paintings on silk that he had done in his lifetime; there were several hundreds of them, and people thought this wonderful. Once he

	820 821	825 827	830	840 841	847	850	860	870	880
RULERS	MU-TSUNG		WEN-TSUNG	WU-TSUNG	HSÜAN-TSUNG		I-TSUNG		HSI-
REIGN ERAS			YUNG-HO ERA						
IMPORTANT EVENTS			834 <i>'Sweet Dew' Incident</i>	843-5 <i>Religious Persecutions</i>	848 <i>Tunhuang Recovered</i>			Huang Ch'ao Rebellion Rebellion in Shantung	
PAINTERS	<div>CH'ENG HSIU-CHI (804-863)</div>								
	<div>HSÜ PIAO-JEN</div>								
	<div>HSIANG CHU</div>								
	<div>HSIANG HSIN</div>								
POETS	<div>CH'ANG TS'AN</div>								
	<div>PO CHÜ-I (772-846)</div>								
	<div>LI SHANG-YIN (812?-858)</div>								
TEXTS ON ART	<div>TU MU (803-852)</div>								
	<div> <i>T'ang-ch'ao ming-hua lu</i> <i>Li-lai ming-hua chi</i> </div>								
ARCHAEOLOGY, ETC.									

880	890	900	905	910	920	930	940	
-TSUNG	CHAO-TSUNG			FIVE DYNASTIES				RULERS
				AND				REIGN ERAS
<i>Emperor Flees to Shu and Returns to Ch'ang-an</i>			FALL OF T'ANG		TEN KINGDOMS			IMPORTANT EVENTS
<div> <div>--- T'IAO KUANG-YIN ---</div> <div>--- SUN WEI ---</div> <div>--- CHANG HSÜN ---</div> <div>--- CHING HAO ---</div> <div>--- LI CH'ENG (919-967) ---</div> </div>								PAINTERS
								POETS
								TEXTS ON ART
								ARCHAEOLOGY, ETC.

said: "In my sleep a fairy came and taught me how to paint." Chang calls him "dangerously ingenious," and says that he liked to paint "strange rocks in spirit and form deep and dangerous; he could do clouds airy and floating."

Chang Yen-yüan also mentions a monk "of recent times" from K'uai-chi named Tao-fen, whose landscapes were of a lofty nature, and who "excelled in refined and close work." But evidently his style was very different from that of the court artisan painters, or it would not have elicited these lines from Ku K'uang, with their playfully metaphysical beginning and ending, toying with the Buddhist idea that what is visible—Tao-fen, and the full moon on the night of the mid-autumn festival—is therefore illusory:

The true monk in the mirror says to the "real" monk Tao-fen,
I will not bow to Chu Shen or Li Ssu-hsün.
Clear and level, Lake Tung-t'ing is spread out
With ink and brush he dots out the clouds of Tsang-wu (in Kiangsi).
Now let us look at the night of the fifteenth month
And beneath the full moon see the mountains as if they were in a painting.¹²³

Chang Yen-yüan saw in the southern hall of the commandery of Wu-hsing two walls with paintings of trees and rocks. The composition, he considered, was like Tao-fen's, but a yamen official explained to him that a pupil of Tao-fen's named Hsü Piao-chen had painted them. "Now," the official said, "he is living near the border of our commandery: he is not yet enfeebled by age, and his strength of brush is still vigorous and spirited." They sent for the old man, who came and said that these were the best things he had ever done. He proudly pointed out his single and double strokes, and his curved and broken lines. "No sooner had he finished his composition than [he found that] he had mysteriously arrived at wonderful effects."¹²⁴ Chang goes on to give his own impressions of the paintings:

The two walls just referred to are works in which the artist realized his aim and are [therefore] profound and wonderful. When one beholds the deeply concealed mists and rapids, the obscured and hidden caves and springs, the dragon roots coiling their scales, the dizzy trunks towering over green [hills], then all that is of a heavy substance falls to the ground and a blue whirlwind fills the hall. On the tea hills of Wu-hsing the waters rush and the rocks are strange: the region suited the nature [of the artist], so that some one asked him to go among the hills and had him draw the Gorge of the Bright Moon from nature. Taking advantage of this occasion he set forth in writing what he had seen, in order that there might be the words of an appreciative person—such that those who knew it might smile [with satisfaction], and [even] those who did not would clap their hands [in admiration].

Hsiang Jung, whom Chang Yen-yüan calls in this section a really perverse character, was one of the first of this "second generation" of eccentrics, active in the second quarter of the ninth century. Chang says he was "crossgrained and astringent."¹²⁵ Ching Hao in the *Pi-fa chi* wrote:

Hsiang Jung, the hermit, painted trees and rocks hard and coarse, but without clearly indicating their angular edges. He obtained the secret of mysterious truth only in the usage of *Ink*, and he has

no *bone* in the use of *Brush*. However, his mind was so untrammelled that he never lost the spiritual atmosphere of the true essence of the Universal, and with this basic, truthful atmosphere dominating, he managed to reduce the seductive quality [which is otherwise characteristic of boneless painting].¹²⁶

In this respect, Ching Hao compares him to Wu Tao-tzu, whose merits were the opposite. By "angular edges" Ching Hao presumably means the faceted, linear style exemplified by the landscapes on the walls of the tomb of I-te (plates 34-37). Hsiang Jung's style, therefore, which held the balance between the boneless and the linear, can be said to have been truly painterly. The verdict of the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* is one of grudging admiration: "His brushwork was dry and hard without warmth; consequently all the connoisseurs ridiculed his harshness. But his peaks were especially awe-inspiring, and there was no one like him."¹²⁷ None of his pictures is mentioned in texts before the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u*, which notes two in the imperial collection: *Pines and Peaks*, and *Recluse amid Pines in Winter*. His son and grandson are known only through references in poems by Fang Kan. Of the landscapes of his son Hsiang Chu, who lived in retirement at T'ien-t'ai in Kiangsu, Fang Kan wrote: "The places where [the ink was] splashed were then connected into black recesses and caves."¹²⁸ Hsiang Hsin, in the opinion of Fang Kan, even surpassed his grandfather. An inscription Fang wrote for one of his paintings says that "in the disorderly areas of brushwork he reveals his true ability," and "in the light traces of spattered [ink] he shows the dessication of clustered trees."¹²⁹

LATE T'ANG LANDSCAPE PAINTERS IN SZECHWAN

The ninth century was a period of gradually deepening crisis in T'ang culture. As the central machinery began to break down, rebellions of increasing frequency and seriousness, such as the great popular uprising in Chekiang and the revolt of 874 in Shantung and Hopei, intensified economic troubles, producing a xenophobia which found expression in the proscription of all foreign religions in 845 and the Huang Ch'ao massacre of 878. In 881 the Emperor was forced to flee from Ch'ang-an and take refuge in Szechwan. Although he returned to the capital and the dynasty survived another twenty-five years, this was the beginning of the end. The choice of Szechwan was a natural one. Remote but not too remote, prosperous and self-contained, the Red Basin was economically and, to some extent, culturally a world in itself. After the establishment of the T'ang, Chengtu came within the cultural orbit of Ch'ang-an, yet it always preserved a certain autonomy. As Li Po's famous lines show, the road thither was long and perilous. Artists had been sent to paint the scenery along the way, but it was not a journey lightly undertaken.

After the T'ang emperor returned to Ch'ang-an from his flight to Chengtu he sent one of his military commanders, Wang Chien, to quell a revolt in Szechwan. Having done so, Wang Chien remained in Chengtu, and by 891 Ch'ang-an was so powerless that Wang Chien was able to declare himself king of Shu. When the dynasty finally collapsed in 906 he proclaimed himself Emperor of Former Shu. He died in 918, but the little dynasty survived till it was absorbed by

later T'ang in 925. Thus for nearly forty years Shu remained a haven of peace and stability which attracted officials, writers, and artists not only from Ch'ang-an but from as far away as the east coast.

Even before this, however, there had been a handful of Szechwanese painters whose reputations had spread beyond the borders of Shu. Wang Tsai was already a well-known artist when the poet Tu Fu visited Chengtu in 760. In the Chen-yüan era (785-805) he was received as an honoured guest by the governor, Wei Kao, so his span of activity roughly covers forty years from the middle of the eighth century. William Hung in his life of Tu Fu suggests that perhaps a neighbour of Tu Fu's had seen his poem about a painting of horses by Wei Yen and had liked it so much that he asked him to write, on a landscape painting he had in his own house, the now famous "Lines Playfully Written on a Landscape Painting by Wang Tsai":

Ten days to draw a river.
Five days, a rock.
You must know that good work cannot be hurried.
In time Wang Tsai will leave you a real painting
Of the marvellous K'un-lun Mountain and Fang-hu Island
To hang on the white wall of your lofty building.
From Lake Tung-t'ing near Pa-ling eastward to Japan,
The water between red banks seems to flow into the Heavenly River.
Through the vapour, the clouds—and flying dragons too are rising.
Here the boatman and the fisherman are turning into a harbour,
These mountain trees are bending under waves of wind.
This artist excels even the ancients in the painting of distance.
There must be several thousand miles to a foot.
I would like to take a pair of sharp Ping-chou scissors,
Cut down and carry away this half of the Wu-Sung River.¹³⁰

These lines suggest that what Tu Fu saw was not a hanging scroll of the familiar kind, which he could have rolled up and taken away, but a large panel forming a screen or a partition, a common format for T'ang landscape painting, as noted earlier. Chu Ching-hsüan writes only of Wang Tsai's screen painting:

I myself saw in the audience chamber of the late Secretary Hsi K'uei a picture screen (*i'u chang*) of two trees above a river; one a pine, the other a cedar. An old wistaria vine twisted around them, winding up towards the sky and reaching downward to the water. There were innumerable branches and leaves, criss-crossing, curving, and bending, and yet distributed without confusion. Some were dead, others vigorous; one grew rank, another drooped; this was straight, that inclined. Leaves were piled on leaves, a thousand-fold; branches divided in the four directions. It was the sort of work that a connoisseur prizes, but that vulgar eyes find hard to appreciate.

Again at Hsing-shan Ssu I saw a "Four Seasons" painting by him on folding screens. It was as if he had brought Creation itself into the sitting room, with all its changes of climate and weather, with the eight periods and the four seasons, all rendered with the ultimate of subtlety. So for his landscapes and his pines and rocks he may be placed in the excellent class, top grade.¹³¹

Chu Ching-hsüan evidently writes of Wang Tsai's work from personal knowledge. Chang Yen-yüan merely praises his "cunning and meticulousness," and says that he chiefly painted the landscapes of Shu, "making them like openwork carving, so deeply were they hollowed out; while their steep irregularity was rendered with a cunning precipitousness."¹³² This is an apt description of one of the main styles of T'ang landscape painting which became even more forced and artificial in the ninth century, if the Tunhuang frescoes are a reliable guide (plates 87-89).

Wei Yen was another painter whom Tu Fu knew in Szechwan. He was a native of Ch'ang-an and may have taken refuge in Chengtu at the time of the An Lu-shan Rebellion, though this is not certain. Tu Fu met him several times, it seems, and one day saw one of his paintings of pine trees which moved him to compose this poem:

How many people in the world can paint ancient pine-trees?
 Pi Hung is already old, but Wei Yen is still young.
 When he wields the brush it is as if a steady wind stirred their branches;
 All who enter the hall are moved and astonished at the beauty of the painting.
 There stand two pine-trees, their bark furrowed and encrusted with moss;
 Like twisted iron rods their entwined branches reach aloft;
 The cracks show white like the rotting bones of dead dragons and tigers;
 They cast black shadows, like those of thunder-clouds.
 At the foot of the trees sits a barbarian monk, sunk in meditation;
 With shaggy brows and snow-white head, he is free of all desire.
 His robe leaves his right shoulder uncovered; his feet are bare.
 From among the branches, pine-cones have fallen around him . . .
 Master Wei! Master Wei! This is a fortunate meeting indeed!
 I have a piece of fine white silk from Eastern Szechwan
 Which no embroidery has yet embellished.
 I have already had it smoothed so that it gleams pure and fresh;
 I beg you, Sir, to let fly your brush and paint me a tall straight pine.¹³³

Whether Wei Yen obliged we do not know. Chu Ching-hsüan says that he was something of a recluse, that he was a good painter of landscapes, bamboos, and trees (an art which he probably learned from his father Wei Luan), and that he had an "untrammelled" style. "With every touch of the Yüeh brush (presumably a speciality of Chekiang) that he used there would spring into being saddled horses, or figures, or landscapes, or clouds and mist . . . For his mountains he would lay down his ink with a circular motion, for water he would rub with the flat of his hand."¹³⁴ He adds, surprisingly, that "by exploiting to the full such subtleties," he achieved a high degree of realism!

Chang Yen-yüan's description of Wei Yen's art is vivid. He

worked with a forceful brush and a lofty style. He was good also at doing small-scale horses, cattle or sheep, among mountains and plains. People generally knew Yen only as a horse expert, and did not realise that his pines and rocks were even finer. In the space of an inch or two [he would give you] a thousand fathoms, with serried boughs collecting shadows. His mists were a thin blurriness;

one seemed [to hear] the noise of his rain storms. In his contortions all possible use was made of bending and over-arching shapes; in his meanderings he exploited forms like twisting dragons to the limit.¹³⁵

He seems indeed to have been a worthy forerunner of the great masters of the tenth century, and it is surprising that Ching Hao does not mention him. Evidently his works were admired in the Sung Dynasty, for there is in Peking a picture entitled *A Hundred Horses in a Landscape* that purports to be a copy by Li Kung-lin of one of his scrolls. Among Wei Yen's paintings in Hui-tsung's collection were several *Horses in a Landscape*, *Pines and Rocks*, *Herding Cattle*, and *A Monk Beneath a Pine Tree*; there was also a picture entitled *Reading the Tablet*.¹³⁶ Mi Fu noted that the great eleventh-century calligrapher Chang Yu-cheng spent a year acquiring a painting attributed to Wei Yen, of an old cypress tree in which the branches intertwined in a very strange manner like serpents or dragons, and the stones were roughly wrinkled, "far beyond the ordinary."¹³⁷

The *I-chou ming-hua lu* mentions a number of other painters active in Szechwan in the ninth century. They too are shadowy figures, but all, for one reason or another, are worth at least a mention. Ch'ang Ts'an, a native of Ch'ang-an who came to Chengtu in the 860-874 era, was noted chiefly for his Buddhist and Taoist figure subjects, which included at least two paintings of the *Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove*.¹³⁸ Landscape backgrounds of some kind—like his *Lao Tzu Crossing the Shifting Sands*, which conjures up images of the sweeping washes of late T'ang wall-painting at Tunhuang, and his *Pilgrimage to the Five Sacred Peaks*—must have been included in some of the frescoes painted in Buddhist and Taoist temples in Chengtu by the Taoist monk Chang Su-ch'ing. But he was chiefly a painter of Taoist immortals, and of spirits of the hills and streams. The *I-chou ming-hua lu* says that while still a boy Chang saw many Sui and T'ang masterpieces in a patron's collection, so perhaps his style was less provincial than it might otherwise have been.¹³⁹

This list of T'ang landscape painters can be concluded with three men who found sanctuary in Chengtu in the dying years of the dynasty. Chang Hsün was a Cantonese (a native of "Nan-hai")—the first encountered in this book—who evidently spent some time in Chekiang and Hunan before going to Szechwan in the 881-885 era, for Kuo Jo-hsü says that he was "good at painting the mountains of Wu and the cliffs of Ch'u."¹⁴⁰ The *Hsian-ho hua-p'ü* records pictures of *Snowy Peaks and a Perilous Bridge*, Hsüeh-feng wei-chan (the word *chan* refers to the kind of bridge or path cantilevered out from a cliff such as is depicted in *Ming-huang's Journey*, plate 43). But Chang Hsün's most famous work was the series of three landscapes he painted between 881 and 885 on the rear wall of the Ta-en T'ang (Great Compassion Hall) of Chao-chüeh Ssu in Chengtu, called the *Mountain(s) at Three Times of Day* (San-shih shan). The first was a view at dawn, the second at noon, the third at dusk.¹⁴¹

T'iao Kuang-yin was a gentleman painter, a native of Ch'ang-an who fled to Szechwan in the T'ien-fu era (901-904) and lived there more than thirty years. He was over eighty when he died. He was an expert at painting dragons in water, bamboo and rocks, flowers and birds, cats

and rabbits; and he was the master of the great flower painter Huang Ch'üan.¹⁴² His own technique in painting the fantastically contorted T'ai-hu rocks was simply to define the holes and hollows with light ink shading; later exponents of the art of painting fancy rocks went further. Huang Ch'üan's son Huang Chü-pao "would use the tip of his brush to rub in vertical or horizontal markings, [add] various sorts of inserted pebbles, [and make] everything sharp corners and hardness; instead of a single [type, his forms] would be shown like dragons or tigers about to spring."¹⁴³

Sun Wei (or Sun Yü, as he later called himself) is classed in the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* as a painter of deities, and indeed Taoist and Buddhist subjects predominate among his recorded pictures. But while not a landscape painter in the broader sense, he was noted for his dragons in water, pines, rocks, and ink bamboo. He was a native of Kuci-ch'i (Shao-hsing) in Chekiang. After living for some time in Ch'ang-an he went as a refugee to Chengtu between 885 and 888. He was a man of careless temper, wrote Ku Jo-hsü, whose purposes and behaviour were marked by a "lively purity";¹⁴⁴ a bohemian who, though he loved wine, was seldom drunk.¹⁴⁵

Shortly after his arrival in Chengtu, Sun Wei was asked to paint two walls with mountains and rocks, and two with dragons in water, in the Ying-t'ien Ssu in Chengtu. He was particularly noted for his painting of water. He also executed in Chengtu a wall-painting entitled *Master Fu Ou* [a Taoist immortal] *with Pines and Rocks and Ink Bamboo* in Chao-hsüeh Ssu, the Taoist temple where Chang Hsün had done his picture of the three times of day. Evidently, since the Buddhist proscription of 845 it had been the Taoist temples, now undergoing something of a revival, that provided the patronage, and wall space, for landscape painters. The subjects painted by Sun Wei and Chang Hsün in Chao-hsüeh Ssu suggest a new combination of figures and landscape on a large scale. For this Sun Wei was well endowed. The *I-chou ming-hua lu* states that he had two styles: refined and delicate; and dashing, wild, and loose—though always in good taste and never vulgar. Kuo Jo-hsü says "his brush strength had a wild strangeness," and, like Wu Tao-tzu, "his success lay not in his handling of colours." He came to be regarded as the greatest of the painters of Shu. Later Su Tung-p'o, who must have seen his wall-paintings in Chengtu, wrote in admiration of his "rushing torrents and raging waves breaking against rocks and twisting around mountain shores, adopting themselves to the shapes of the barriers."¹⁴⁶

After the Second World War a handscroll, labelled *Kao I t'u* (Lofly Recluses) and attributed to Sun Wei in the handwriting of Sung Hui-tung, appeared in China. It is now in the Shanghai Museum. Ch'eng Ming-shih considers that the subject is not the Four Greybeards in retirement at the beginning of Han, but four out of an incomplete scroll of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, and cites the tomb tiles from Nanking as an important early treatment of the same theme.¹⁴⁷ This may be the scroll listed as the *Four Greybeards* under Sun Wei in the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u*. In execution it is indeed powerful and concentrated, yet refined and delicate; but a ninth-century date would be hard to substantiate.

Themes in Sui and T'ang Landscape Painting

In *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China* I tried to reconstruct the lost art of Six Dynasties landscape painting on the basis of the recorded titles of paintings in early texts. I did this partly because there was practically nothing else to go on. But in the T'ang Dynasty, the position is quite different. Although the actual titles of landscape paintings preserved in T'ang texts such as the *Ming-hua chi* and *Ming-hua lu* are not numerous (in the case of some artists none are mentioned at all), the number of pictures attributed to T'ang painters in Sung and Yüan books runs into hundreds. There is no way of finding out whether these pictures were originals, copies, or simply works done in the manner, or the supposed manner, of the T'ang master. Moreover, the further we are removed in time from the T'ang Dynasty, the longer and more improbable do the lists become. It is possible, on the other hand, to extract useful information about the character of T'ang landscape painting from a more general consideration of its subject matter; and for this there is some reasonably reliable evidence. I have chosen for discussion some of the themes that seem to have been particularly popular.

THE WORLD IN MINIATURE: GARDENS AND MINIATURE GARDENS

This book and its predecessor are concerned with the ways in which Chinese civilisation has given visible form to its ideas about the world. The Chinese have instinctively sought understanding of things not so much through abstract speculation as through union with nature, recognising that what is visible is but an outward, changing manifestation of what is infinite and eternal. Every natural form, therefore, from the little rock on the scholar's desk to the towering peaks of Hua-shan, is both a reminder of, and a means of establishing contact with, the Reality that lies

beyond forms. It was Tsung Ping in the fourth century who first suggested that landscape painting might be just as good a way of apprehending the order of things as meditating upon the Tao, and this idea has never been lost sight of.

The view that the visible form, even in miniature, is the path to understanding of the whole is fundamental to Chinese art. In the Erh-liang Miao, a temple famous for its miniature gardens, Boerschmann found this couplet:

Towers and galleries emerge from the profusion of flowers;
In a single grain the whole universe is contained.¹

The latter is a Buddhist phrase, but one well understood by poets everywhere. Chinese literature abounds in descriptions of gardens and their contents. A famous T'ang enthusiast was the statesman Li Te-yü (787-849), who described in detail the garden he created on a hillside near Ch'ang-an. In the introduction to his poems on the P'ing-ch'üan garden he recounts the enormous trouble he went to over a period of twenty years to collect rare plants and trees, of which he gives a list, carefully distinguishing them by class, giving their origin and natural habitat, and noting that he had the correct name engraved on a stone beside each plant.² He lovingly describes his fancy rocks. Some he made into a screen beside a limpid stream; others, with markings like "fairies' feet" and "stag hoofs," he set before his "Buddha bed," presumably a flat slab of rock. The ten poems that follow his catalogue are dedicated to favourite plants and trees in his garden.

And here is Han Yü, in a tribute to the enthusiasm of P'ei Tu, duke of Chin-kuo, for "piling up rocks":

Your Grace really loves the mountains, you gaze on them from dawn to dusk;
You were regretting that you could only see the mountains and couldn't actually wander
through them too
So you gave people in the mountains the order to gather together stones from the ravines
One day these rocks were piled up before your window, and then arranged according to your
directions.
Now there are caverns there hollowed out as if by spirits, and rock walls cleft as if by Heaven.
And you sit all day, among your cliffs and caves and entertain your friends and relations with
music.
Who would have believed that the resting place of a crag from Hung or Hua should be so close
to the mansions of princes and dukes?³

It matters little to the Chinese philosopher whether his garden is a "real" one or a miniature one—*p'an-ching*, literally, tray scenery. He derives the same pleasure from tending and contemplating both, while the same principles of design and composition apply to both, the only difference being that his wandering through his miniature garden, as through a landscape painting, is done in the imagination. On account of the popularity of *bonsai*, the miniature garden is often thought to be of Japanese origin. But the idea seems to have travelled to Japan from China, via Korea, in the sixth century. There is a tradition in Japan that the Empress Suiko (ruled

593–628) received a present of a fairy hill censer (*po-shan hsiang-lu*) from the Kingdom of Kudara. When the Emperor Yomei was ill, the Regent Shōtoku Taishi, to divert him, made a *Katsura hachi*, literally, cassia wood (fragrant) vessel. He took a basin, and with rocks and sand fashioned a landscape with villages, to which he added trees and buildings. He put a censer in a chamber covered with thatch, lit it, and showed it to the Emperor.⁴

The Japanese characteristically codified the art of garden design, which they had got from China, at an early stage. A book of methods of gardening of the Heian period, *Sakuteiki*, for instance, sets out precise instructions as to how *yarimizu* (guided water, directed streams and runnels) should be arranged in garden layouts, and how stones should be placed to narrow or widen the channel and thus alter the rate of flow of the water, or form an obstruction to cause it to veer sharply. For such guided streams the best stones are those so large they can hardly be loaded on a cart. It is not surprising that the Japanese, who had barely stepped onto the stage of world civilisation at a time when the older cultures were already seeking their answers to some of the fundamental questions of metaphysics, should have found in the cult of the garden a direct, uncomplicated path to the eternal verities. So they developed the garden, and the aesthetics of garden making, with extreme subtlety and care, until it acquired the discipline, depth, and universality of a philosophical system; but how much of this system is rooted in much older Japanese beliefs is uncertain, for even the native Shintō religion is replete with ideas borrowed from Taoism and Buddhism.

Connected with the Chinese origin of the miniature landscape is the cult of the *po-shan hsiang-lu*, in which a fairy world was represented in miniature on the slopes of a conical hill censer.⁵ The fairy mountain cult is also suggested in the “mountain inkstone,” *yen shan*. In the Six Dynasties, these miniature mountains could symbolise either the Buddhist Sumeru or the Taoist P’eng-lai or K’un-lun. Miniature mountain landscapes were very popular in the T’ang Dynasty. Rolf Stein, in his article on miniature gardens cited in note 4, mentions a T’ang sale of antiques among which were two little mountains of green jasper which, when soaked in wine, shone with a splendid blue-green sheen. Mountains of jade, crystal, or soapstone have been popular ever since. Su Ngo, in his *Tu-yang tsa-pien*, described two artificial mountains of fragrant wood, one of which represented the world of the Taoist immortals, the other, sent by Silla as a present to Tai-tsung (probably in the Ta-li era, 766–780), being a *Wan-fō shan* (myriad Buddha mountain). It was a jewelled construction about ten feet high, carved of aloes from Indochina, and on it were Buddha images in a setting of buildings and natural verdure, all done in great detail with pearls and precious stones.⁶

The Buddha on a mountain was a natural product of Chinese religious syncretism. Just as Taoist sacred mountains became vaguely confused with the Buddhist Sumeru, so were the mountains the natural place for the search for the Tao or for Buddhist enlightenment. In Six Dynasties art Buddhist deities were sometimes depicted meditating, or being worshipped, on the mountains (Tunhuang, Cave 285, for example; in clay relief in Maichishan, Cave 133), and the theme remained popular in the T’ang Dynasty. Chang Yen-yüan records the painted Buddha

assemblage with landscape done on a wall of Ching-ai Ssu in Ch'ang-an by the seventh-century painter Ho Ch'ang-shou, and in the same temple scenes from the life of the Buddha modelled in clay by Tou Hung-kwo.⁷ Yang T'ing-kuang, who once sketched a portrait of Wu Tao-tzu at a lecture, is said by the authors of the *Hua-chien* (about 1320-1330) and the *T'u-hui pao-chien* (1365) to have painted his Buddhas chiefly amid mountains and forests; but the T'ang sources are not so specific, merely saying that he specialised in Buddhist themes and in landscapes.⁸ The most remarkable surviving examples of these Buddhas in landscapes are those modelled in niches on the four sides of the Pagoda of Hōryūji (plates 102 and 103). They are very plastically and pictorially treated, and somewhat archaic in style, suggesting the manner of the sixth century.

The potent magic of the miniature landscape is illustrated by the story Su Ngo tells about Hsüan Chieh, a Taoist at court in the 810-813 period. It appears that he longed to return home to the east, and kept asking the Emperor to be allowed to go, but in vain. "Now there was in the palace," writes Su Ngo,

a sculpture in wood representing the three mountains on the sea (P'eng-lai, Fang-ch'ang, and Ying-chou). It was painted and ornamented with pearls and jade. At the New Year, the Emperor went to contemplate it accompanied by Hsüan Chieh. The Emperor, pointing at P'eng-lai, said, "unless one is a superior immortal one can never attain that region." Hsüan Chieh laughed and said, "These three islands are hardly more than a foot high; no one can pretend that they are difficult to reach. I haven't much power, but I shall try to make a tour for Your Majesty to inspect its beautiful and ugly features, its creatures and apparitions." At once he jumped into the air and became smaller and smaller. Then, suddenly he plunged through the doors of gold and silver. The entourage called and called to him, but he was never seen again. The Emperor missed him very much and came out in boils. As a result of these events this mountain came to be called "The Island Where the True One [Chen-jen] Disappeared." Morning and evening phoenix cranium incense was burned before the island in homage. About ten days later a report came from T'ing-chou that Hsüan Chieh had crossed the sea mounted on a yellow mare.⁹

The reader may prefer the picture of the poet Po Chü-i setting up house in 817 in his retreat on Lu-shan. Such was his obsession with miniature landscapes that one of the first things he did was make a terrace with a basket of earth, and heap on it stones "as big as your fist"; he then made a little lake around it with a ladleful of water. We can get some idea of what Po Chü-i's miniature landscape might have looked like from the recently discovered wall-paintings in the tomb of Prince Chang Huai who committed suicide in 684 and was reburied in 706 (plate 125); two of the attendants are carrying *p'an-ching*. Another related discovery is the miniature glazed pottery rockery with a pond in the Sian Museum (plate 126). The wave-like hills are clothed with verdure and stumpy little trees, and several birds are perched on the hilltops and drinking from the pool. This charming piece was first exhibited as an inkstone, but is now placed in the courtyard of a pottery model of a mansion from a tomb, with which it undoubtedly belongs. This is probably a replica of a "bowl pool," *p'en-ch'ih*. These were so much admired by the T'ang literati that one of them was the subject of a long, rhapsodic *fu* by Hao Hsü-chou, the "P'en-ch'ih

fu." The pool he describes is made of pottery and set in the ground out-of-doors; presumably there were little rocks (pottery ones) and earth or moss, and the illusion stirred the imagination:

Though the ripples are strikingly like billows,
They will hardly drench and soak an inch of earth.

And contemplating it, one could be a vicarious hero:

Fellows who love bold deeds
May darkly take up the fancy of wading over the Ho;
Gentlemen who are not yet bored
May covertly cherish in their hearts the wish to plumb the Sea.¹⁰

The *p'an-ching*, containing in miniature the essentials of a natural landscape, mountains or rocks, trees and water, not only gave the artist an object of contemplation, but taught him basic principles of composition, which may have had a much greater influence on Chinese landscape painting than is generally realised, especially in developing in the painter a sensibility to balance and asymmetry, the importance of the dominating vertical, and the relationship of major to minor elements.

The fairy rock was, in itself, a source of pleasure to the Chinese gentleman, both for its shape and for its associations. It might be an oddly-shaped piece of stone standing on his desk, or a rock ten or more feet high, jagged in outline and full of holes, dredged up from the bottom of Lake T'ai, brought to his garden by ox-cart and there erected at considerable expense. Isolated rocks appear in Han art, not in gardens, but to suggest a fairy landscape or the setting of a hunting scene. In Six Dynasties and early T'ang art these rocks are still fairly small, seldom more than half the height of a man. There are a number of examples in the Shōsōin (plates 66, 67) and in the recently discovered princely tomb paintings in Shensi (R111, R114, R115 etc.). The rocks in the Shōsōin screen are too heavily restored to give an accurate idea of the original technique, but they probably preserve the original shape faithfully enough.

The rocks in post-T'ang art are far larger. A fine T'ai-hu rock that seems to writhe like a dragon stands in the background of the *Eight Gentlemen on a Spring Outing* in the Palace Museum collection in Taiwan, attributed to Chao Yen (died 922), although it may be of slightly later date.¹¹ The evidence of early paintings, although very incomplete, would support the view that by the end of the T'ang Dynasty the fancy rock in a garden had grown from an object not more than three or four feet high to a huge, fantastically-shaped *T'ai-hu shan*, up to twenty or more feet high, such as still can be seen today in the gardens of the Forbidden City in Peking.

As the rocks grew in size and complexity, they offered the painter a challenge unique in Chinese art: the delineation of pure sculptural form for its own sake. Because the rocks are pierced through with holes they present relationships between interior and exterior form which did not engage Western painters and sculptors in quite the same way until modern times. Chinese pictorial art is essentially linear; and it is possible that the gentleman's innate sense of plastic

three-dimensional form found its satisfaction in contemplating these rocks and its outlet in painting them—and even in supervising the carving of them, for often the rocks were not left in their natural state, but were worked on and improved with the chisel. (On the more immediately sensual plane, this feeling for what Berenson called “tactile values” was satisfied in the handling of ceramics, and perhaps of jade.) To paint such a rock imposed quite specific demands on the artist’s technique: on the range and suppleness of his brushstrokes, for contorted outlines had to be expressed in twists and turns of the brush; on his mastery of ink wash, for the cavities had to be modelled in light and shade; and on his technical repertoire, for the pitted surfaces of the rock, its excrescences and roughnesses, had to be expressed through his vocabulary of texture strokes.

In his temple frescoes, Wu Tao-tzu painted “strange rocks that [looked as though] one might touch them.”¹² His eighth-century contemporary Lu Hung painted *k'o shih* (literally, rocks with holes), which may have looked something like those on the Shōsōin screen.¹³ It is legitimate to imagine that Chang Tsao must have further advanced the art; and by the end of the dynasty we read for the first time of a specialist in painting T'ai-hu rocks, T'iao Kuang-yin, a native of Ch'ang-an who settled in Chengtu and became the teacher of Huang Ch'üan.¹⁴

The major breakthrough, however, seems to have occurred shortly after T'iao Kuang-yin's time. Kuo Jo-hsü, writing of the technique of Huang Ch'üan's son Huang Chü-pao, says that his predecessors in painting T'ai-hu rocks would simply hollow out the potholes lightly with ink shading, whereas Chü-pao “would use the tip of his brush to rub in vertical or horizontal markings, [add] various sorts of inserted pebbles, [and make] everything sharp and corners and hardness; instead of a single [type, his forms] would be shown like dragons or tigers about to spring.”¹⁵ In this he may well have been influenced by the unorthodox brush techniques of some of the late T'ang individualists. By the early Sung Dynasty, so complex had these forms become, and so complete the mastery of brush techniques for depicting them, that they may have had some influence on the development of landscape painting itself, particularly on the school of Li Ch'eng, whose mountains were “like clouds,” Kuan T'ung, and Kuo Hsi, whose famous *Early Spring*, in the Palace Museum collection,¹⁶ looks like a T'ai-hu rock enormously enlarged in scale by the addition of trees, buildings, and human figures.¹⁷

TREES AND ROCKS

It was in the T'ang period that “trees and rocks” became a popular subject, particularly with the independent and eccentric painters in ink and wash of the second half of the dynasty. As the Ming critic Li Jih-hua explained it:

In the art of former men, the subject of trees and rocks was quite separate from that of landscape. The concept of a landscape, in general, was high, deep, and comprehensive in extent. It involved a specifically seasonal atmosphere. In a painting of trees and rocks, however, one looks at the casual,

unconstricted brushwork and sees the twisting face of human fortune, the contrast of meeting and parting. One looks for no more.¹⁸

Li Chih-hua mentions no T'ang painter in this connection, but speaks admiringly of Li Ch'eng, and of a tradition of tree and rock painting that carries on down to Ni T'san.

The painting of trees and rocks did not demand the sustained effort of thought and composition of a complete landscape: it was, like bamboo, the ideal vehicle for the expression of spontaneous feeling, while more solid, rich, and various in pictorial possibilities than bamboo painting. Like bamboo, the theme had deep symbolic associations. The tree in its birth and growth, maturity, old age, and death is a symbol of the striving and inevitable end of man himself; the rock stands for that which is eternal and immutable. Scholars loved and admired the rock for a variety of reasons, while trees evoked in the poets intense feelings: Han-shan's "Old Tree" is a symbol of personal integrity:

... The world laughs at its shoddy exterior
And cares nothing for the fine grain of the wood inside.
Stripped free of flesh and hide,
All that remained is the core of the truth.¹⁹

A poem of Han Yü's on the same theme carries both a Taoist and, in the last line, a Buddhist message:

Not a twig or leaf on the old tree,
Wind and frost harm it no more.
A man could pass through the hole in its belly,
Ants crawl searching under its peeling bark.
Its only lodger, the toadstool which dies in a morning,
The birds no longer visit in the twilight.
But its wood can still spark tinder!
It does not care yet to be only the void at its heart.²⁰

The theme of rocks and trees is associated above all among T'ang painters with the name of Chang Tsao. But he was not the first master of this subject. Yen Li-te had painted trees and rocks on a corridor wall of Ching-kung Ssu in Ch'ang-an; Li Ssu-hsün's rendering of the same subject "had an intense forcefulness."²¹ Wu Tao-tzu also painted them, although the Northern Sung painter Wu Tsung-yüan is quoted as having said that compared with those of the eleventh-century painter Wang Kuan, Wu Tao-tzu's were "superficial and not capably related."²² Yet the *Ming-hua chi* had praised the master's "strange rocks that look as if one might touch them . . ."²³ Chang Tsao was the great virtuoso of the eighth century. After him came a succession of masters in the southeast, all of whom—and this can be no accident—were also masters of ink painting: Chang's follower Liu Shang, Pi Hung, Wei Yen, Liu Fang-p'ing, the careful craftsman Wang Tsai (subject of Tu Fu's "ten days to paint a pine, five days to paint a rock"), the eccentrics Hsiang Jung and Wang Mo, Wei Yen, Hsü Pia-jen, and Sun Wei. No vestige of the work of

any of these masters survives, and we are left to picture it from the often vivid descriptions in contemporary literature.

THE FIGURE UNDER A TREE

One of the common conventions in T'ang painting is a man, or more often a woman, standing or sitting under a tree. It has been suggested that this theme originated in Persia, and that its appearance in T'ang China is due to the cosmopolitanism of T'ang taste.²⁴ But it is older than that. A remote and tenuous ancestry can be traced to Han art, where certain magical trees such as the *fu-sang*, the calendar tree, and the *ling-chih* (spirit fungus) are often shown with men beside or beneath them. Figures and trees have ancient associations in Indian mythology as well. The *yakshini* was a sort of dryad or spirit of the fertility of the tree; and Mâyâ gave birth to the Buddha while clasping the branches of a *sâl* tree.

Each of the Seven Buddhas of the Past attained enlightenment under a different tree: Vipasin under a Pâtali (*Bignonia suaveolens*), Kāśyapa under a Nyagrodha (*Ficus indica*), Gautama under an Asvattha (*Ficus religiosa*), and so on.²⁵ The tree under which the bodhisattva Maitreya will attain enlightenment is the *Lung-hua shu* (dragon-flower tree; Sanskrit *Nāgaphuṣpa*; botanical *michelia champaka* or *Mesua roxburghii*); in Six Dynasties reliefs he is often represented seated under his tree, reflecting upon his future destiny as world ruler—the attitude known as the Contemplative Prince. Sometimes a Buddha is depicted beneath his tree, sometimes beside it; while sometimes, particularly in the great paradise paintings, the tree is represented only by a flowered baldachin over his head. Even the lower orders of guardians, *dvānapāla*, may have their trees, examples being the four guardians beneath trees on a small pair of shrine doors in the Shōsōin, painted in gold and silver on black lacquer.

A hanging scroll in Boston depicts Śākyamuni strolling under a flowering mango tree in the Jetavāna Garden, while the ground about his feet is covered with flowers. The painting, carried out in a heavy impasto with mineral colours and gold, bears the inscription "Respectfully copied by Ch'en Yung-chih"—a court painter in the reign of Sung Jen-tsung (1023–1063). Although possibly executed as late as the Ming period, this richly-painted scene accords in certain essential points of style and technique with what is known of the art of Wei-ch'ih I-seng. A detail is illustrated in colour in my book, *Chinese and Japanese Art* (New York, 1965, p. 155).

The man and tree theme has Taoist associations also. When Wei Yen painted a *kao seng* (lofty recluse) beneath a pine tree, he was suggesting both the theme of the communion between man and nature that runs through all Chinese landscape painting and the idea of endurance and longevity, of which the pine tree is a symbol. The convention was already popular in the Six Dynasties, in, for instance, renderings of the Seven Sages, each of whom is represented seated beneath a distinctive tree,²⁶ and it survives in Sun Wei's rendering of the subject (plate R91). It was also a favourite theme in tomb decoration. Very simple examples are the panels from a T'ang tomb at Astana in Sinkiang (plate R7). In each a man, possibly the deceased, stands contem-

plating a tree; in one case he is about to chop it down. Even cruder paintings depicting servants, one beneath a pine, the other in a suggestion of a bamboo grove, were found in a T'ang tomb at T'ai-yüan in Shansi (plates R8 and R9).

A delightful version of the theme is the two pairs of figures painted on paper which were excavated by the Otani Expedition at Turfan and are now in the Tōkyō National Museum (plates R85 and R87). One shows a gentleman tugging at his hat, while a boy servant holds his left arm; the other a lady with a long scarf followed by her maid. In the foreground of each is a little rock. The trees are very freely painted, though it is hard to see what they are meant to be. In the late T'ang Cave 17 (plate R46) at Tunhuang are the figures of a woman (from the dress evidently a servant) and a monk, each standing under a tree from a branch of which hangs a travelling bag and a flask in a leather holder.

The theme of a young lady or ladies standing or sitting under trees, meditating, or playing or listening to music, has come to be considered as typically T'ang. The most famous examples in T'ang art are the six screen panels in the Shōsōin (plates 66 and 67). Three of the women are standing, three seated; behind each is a tree; to the front, or to one side, are one or more fancy rocks. The present mounting of these panels is of later date, and they are heavily restored; but the border and backing are original, the latter being made partly from old documents, one of which bears a date equivalent to 752. Technical and stylistic features of these paintings are discussed in Chapter VII. One of the ladies is holding a fly-whisk or peacock feather, another perhaps lotus buds. Shimada has suggested that the paintings may have been copied from a Chinese original in which these accessories were not properly understood.²⁷

As T'ang gentlemen liked to identify with the scholarly Vimalakīrti, so did ladies find in Māhārī (Chinese Ta-chi-hsiang p'u-sa; Japanese Kichijō-ten) a symbol of aristocratic wealth and beauty, whom painters represented as a beautifully clad lady of the palace. In the Omura collection there is a handscroll depicting Kichijō-ten with other deities and pine trees which, although a twelfth-century painting, is a close copy of a late T'ang work. Fragments of a scroll depicting ladies making music under trees were brought back by Stein from Turfan.

The theme of ladies in gardens was frequently painted by Chou Fang in the eighth century. His scroll of Ladies Tuning a Lute and Drinking Tea exists in several versions, two of which are of early date, though perhaps not as early as Chou Fang. Shown here (plate R63) is a detail from the finer, and shorter, version in Kansas City, in which the space between the figures has been closed up. Although from a Western aesthetic standpoint they appear formally quite isolated from one another, without any ground or background, they are united by their expectant attention on the performer about to play. The garden is suggested very simply by the rock on which the lutanist is sitting and by two small trees, on the left probably a peach, on the right perhaps a pawlonia. The same theme—here the ladies are under what seems to be a cherry tree—is charmingly portrayed in an inlaid panel on a *biwa* (lute) in the Shōsōin. Knowing the ancient mythical and symbolic associations of the figure and the tree we might be tempted to look for

them here. But by now this has become a mere pictorial convention, although the fact that the figure is so often a woman says much about the free status of women in T'ang China.

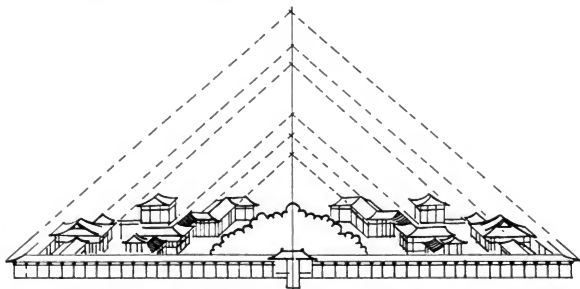
ARCHITECTURE

Although there are no records of Han architectural painters, the evidence of the reliefs, engravings, and paintings in Han tombs suggests that the necessary skills were already beginning to develop. From the third to the sixth century rhapsodic *fu* poems descriptive of the splendours, real and imaginary, of the four capitals—Ch'ang-an, Loyang, Chengtu, and Nanking—provided the inspiration for scrolls painted by such artists as Shih Tao-shih and Tai K'uei, in what must have been an elaborate and fanciful manner. Paintings of palaces must have been popular in the sixth and seventh centuries, for as noted in Chapter V, Chai Tzu-ch'ien, Cheng Fa-shih, and Tung Po-jen were all masters of that exacting craft—perhaps, as Chang Yen-yüan suggests, because, the terrain around the capital was flat and they had no opportunity to paint mountain landscapes.²⁸ Was the need to stress the verticals in an essentially horizontal view also one of the impulses that led to the popularity of towers and tall pagodas in the cities, and in the landscape painting, of the North China plain?

As president of the Board of Works under T'ai-tsung, Yen Li-te was an expert architectural painter, as one would expect;²⁹ his contemporary T'an Chih-min painted architecture in the manner of his master Tung Po-jen. Perhaps he even improved upon it, for the *Ming-hua chi* quotes the monk Ts'ung as saying that T'an's "buildings, towers and terraces were rendered so as to distinguish light and shade and front from back [or foreground and background—the phrase is ambiguous]. Though one examines all his predecessors in turn this man will be found to be unique."³⁰ Nothing is said about the actual technique T'an Chih-min used—whether, for example, he employed a ruler (*chieh-hua*), as did later exponents of the art; but we can assume that he did. What is significant about this passage is that it suggests a new mastery of techniques for rendering three-dimensional buildings on a flat surface. In view of the special character of perspective in Chinese painting this is of some importance. Did T'an Chih-min evolve, or perfect, a form of perspective with receding lines converging to a vanishing point? If so, he achieved something quite new; for hitherto, receding planes had simply been placed at an angle to the picture surface with no diminution—on the contrary, the lines might even diverge in order to compensate for the apparent convergence of lines which we know to be parallel. A celebrated case of this is the bed in the Admonitions Scroll of Ku K'ai-chih.

The example of Tunhuang shows that for perspective to appear convincing, it does not have to be geometrically correct. The most spectacular surviving examples of perspective drawing of the period are to be seen in some of the celestial palaces in the paradise compositions. The detail from the upper part of the south wall of Cave 148 (mid-T'ang) shows a convincing arrangement of buildings. If one traces the receding lines along the edges of roofs and walls one finds that while

they more or less intersect along the central axis, there is no single vanishing-point, but a different vanishing-point for each pair of lines. These are not random, but are fairly regularly disposed so that the vanishing-point for the lines of the outermost roofs is higher than that for those closer to the centre, as this simple diagram shows.



This is a compromise between the old parallel perspective—where there is no diminution at all, and which in any case does not work for a symmetrically disposed complex, but is only possible for objects to one side or other of the viewer—and true geometric perspective, in which all lines in the same plane converge upon a single vanishing-point.

Why did the Chinese not use the single vanishing-point, particularly in the symmetrical paradise composition where it would present no technical difficulties at all? The reason may be that what is scientifically correct may not be satisfying or convincing to the eye. In the case of Cave 148, for example, a true perspective would have flattened the converging lines of the outermost buildings to the point where all detail would be lost. This would suggest that in general the primary concern of the Chinese painter was to produce an optically acceptable and at the same time an informative rendering of space, rather than a scientifically accurate rendering of form in space. This was left to take care of itself, and if the partial application of rule-of-thumb techniques for suggesting convergence could be applied, the artist might do this, but never at the expense of the space as a whole.

This point is well illustrated by the criticisms levelled by the Sung writer Shen Kua against the great tenth-century landscape painter Li Ch'eng for, as he put it, "painting his caves from below" and thereby preventing himself from seeing his building whole. "When Li Ch'eng paints mountains, pavilions and building," he writes in his *Meng-ch'i pi-t'an*,

he paints the caves from below. He believes that looking up one perceives the caves of a pagoda as a person on the level ground, and is able to see the beams and rafters of its structure. This is absurd. All landscapes have to be viewed from the "angle of totality to behold the part," much in the manner in which we look at an artificial rockery in our gardens. If we apply Li's method to the painting of real mountains, we are unable to see more than one layer of the mountain at a time. Could that be called art? Li Ch'eng surely does not understand the principle of viewing the part from the angle of totality. His measurement of height and distance certainly is a fine thing. But should one attach paramount importance to the angles and corners of buildings?³¹

How far did Li Ch'eng in fact go towards a truly scientific perspective? Presumably he went a good deal further than the partially correct and unrelated details such as we find in Tunhuang Cave 172. Whatever he achieved, later painters, inspired by the desire for "totality," gradually retreated further and further from the kind of perspective he was striving for. But it would be risky to attempt any generalisations about T'ang perspective on the basis of what has so far been discovered. One painter (in Cave 172, for example) was able to construct one side of a pavilion more or less correctly but could not manage a whole building, still less relate one building correctly to another. Another (Cave 148), without applying the rules correctly, was able to construct a convincing group. If any T'ang painter successfully combined both techniques the evidence is lost. Perhaps it was the iconography of the paradise itself, with its hierarchy of celestial beings symmetrically disposed about a central figure, which is essentially an Indian rather than a Chinese type of figure composition (there are no Han examples of it), that first forced the abandonment of parallel perspective and the construction of a system of lines converging to meet along a central axis: in other words, it was an enclosed space within the wings of the celestial palace which created the convention, and not the desire to render buildings as such correctly.

By the sixth century, painters had discovered that if one shows one side of a building receding from the viewer at an angle, the side nearer the viewer (the "front") should also recede and should not be parallel to the picture plane. There are wall-paintings at Tunhuang (Caves 423, 419, 296, for example) in which all planes of the buildings and walls recede at an angle as they should, and none are parallel to the picture plane.³² The lines, however, do not converge properly. On the other hand, when we examine large isolated buildings such as the desert forts in Caves 103 and 217 we find that whereas the perspective lines generally appear to converge on a single vanishing-point, one wall or roof line is always parallel to the picture plane.³³ The T'ang artist therefore, while striving for one kind of optical correction, has neglected another. A careful examination of Chinese architectural painting suggests that in no case was a truly accurate rendering, in which both the angle of the building and the converging of the lines are geometrically correct, ever achieved. A conspicuous example of this failure is the decoration on the walls of the entrance shaft of the tomb of Prince I-te, representing triple gate-towers (*ch'ieh*), an angle tower, and the beginning of the palace wall. All the receding lines of each separate building below eye level slope upwards and are parallel, all those above slope downwards and are likewise parallel. See *T'ang Li Chung-jun mu pi-hua* (Peking, 1974), plate 1.

"Correct" perspective was not achieved because, as Shen Kua makes clear, it was not desired. Only a static, symmetrical composition such as a Buddhist paradise could make use of the single vanishing-point (or a series of points one above the other on a single central axis). Chinese landscape painters kept their priorities in the right order, and at the critical point where the techniques of artists such as Li Ch'eng might have brought landscape painting, figuratively, to a standstill, they deliberately relegated them to a minor place. His discoveries, and those of T'ang artists such as Tung Po-chen that had led up to them, were thus to some extent sacrificed to a more flexible, organic, and generalised conception of pictorial space.

THE EXCURSION

The theme of people enjoying themselves in a park or garden is an ancient one in Chinese art, and such pictures have always been popular. Not only did they illustrate a favourite occupation of the nobility and gentry, but they were ideally suited to the handscroll format: the stroll through the palace garden or the excursion in the hills could carry you as far as the roll of silk was long. As in an English eighteenth-century park, new delights and prospects opened up at every turn of the path; there were small hills from which to enjoy the view, cool bowers to shade you from the sun, pavilions in which to take tea and listen to a waterfall, boats waiting in case you felt like a turn on the water. Such pictures could give nothing but pleasure, especially if you unrolled them on a dark wintry day or when you were burdened with the cares of office.

Some of these paintings were intimate in scope—just a few ladies strolling in a park in spring-time, for example. At the other end of the scale is the theme of the weeks- or months-long imperial progress through the provinces, or to a sacrifice on one of the sacred mountains—generally T'ai-shan. Here, although gentle hills give way to pinnacles and gorges, the landscape is never terrifying: the peaks might reach to heaven, the chasms might be dark and the streams raging torrents; but they are make-believe, the setting for a glittering pageant. Such pictures were carefully done, with much fine detail, and the colouring was rich and decorative rather than natural. Mineral colours with gold were appropriate. The success of the artist depended upon his anonymity: he did not interpose himself between the viewer and the subject, for to do so would be to break the spell. For this reason these pictures are relatively easy to copy, and it is often very difficult to determine who painted them and when.

The excursion theme may go back to the Han Dynasty. It is possible that some Han wall-paintings and tomb reliefs, generally thought of as concerned with funerary ceremonies, actually represented such excursions.³⁴ From the third to the sixth century, the records are full of paintings of this theme, some inspired by *fu* poems. Ku K'ai-chih, for example, painted a picture of the *Heir-Apparent and his Guests Rambling through the Western Garden on a Clear Night*; the last Liang emperor, Yüan Ti, did a *Springtime Excursion in a Park* on hemp paper; and there were many more. Two scrolls of similar subjects by the late sixth-century painter Yang Tzu-hua were among old paintings which survived into the early T'ang. Cheng Fa-shih was expert in the

subject, as was Tung Po-chen, and we have already discussed in some detail Chan Tzu-ch'ien's *Travelling in Springtime* (plates 40-42). A painting by the early T'ang architectural expert T'an Chih-min, *Wandering in Spring and Enjoying the Arts*, was still in existence in Chang Yen-yüan's time.³⁵ There was a painting attributed to Li Ssu-hsün in Hui-tsung's collection called *Ming-huang Going on an Excursion in the Imperial Park*;³⁶ Li was sixty-two when Ming-huang came to the throne, and it is just possible that he painted such a picture. It is possible also that this is the correct title of the famous picture in the Palace Museum collection (plates 43-45) now called *Ming-huang's Journey to Shu*, which seems to represent a pleasurable excursion rather than the tragic event of 755. There may also be some connection between these paintings and others in Hui-tsung's collection: Li Ssu-hsün's *Picking Lotus in the Imperial Park* and *Gathering Melons*, ascribed to his son Li Chao-tao.

Of the many specialists who celebrated the glitter and pageantry, the excursions and *fêtes champêtres* of the court of Ming-huang, one of the best was Chang Hsün, who often depicted the pleasures of the palace ladies, particularly of Yang Kuei-fei and her sister K'uo-kuo. A version of his painting of the latter going out on a springtime excursion (*K'uo-kuo Fu-jeu yü ch'üu t'u-chuan*), formerly in Hui-tsung's collection, is now in the museum in Shenyang.³⁷ Chu Ching-hsün says of Chang Hsün that "the layout of his scenery, with kiosks, terraces, trees, flowers, and birds, was carried out to perfection"; and that in his illustration to a poem inspired by a *fu* of the Han poet Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju, he let "his imagination play with views of winding balustrades, kiosks and terraces, golden wells, and wu-t'ung trees."³⁸

Flower painting does not really come within the scope of this book, though we should mention Yin Chung-jung, a painter of the last years of the seventh century and the early years of the eighth, who was good at birds and flowers and was said to be able to get the effect of the "five colours" by the use of ink alone.³⁹ Pien Luan was another flower painter who did garden scenes, and was a specialist in painting cut flowers and branches.⁴⁰ The birth of a school of flower painting in the T'ang Dynasty was stimulated by the demands of Buddhist iconography, particularly by the need to depict flowers described in the Paradise texts, where foreign techniques such as "flowers in relief" were used to good effect. These specialists may have contributed significantly to the splendour of the excursion pictures.

After the mid-eighth century this kind of painting, so popular in the first half of the dynasty, is barely mentioned in the literature. Was it that the great imperial parks and gardens never fully recovered from the An Lu-shan Rebellion? Was it that the activity depicted had gone out of fashion? Was it that the pageantry was faded, the glamour gone? Perhaps such pictures reminded people too painfully of the halcyon days of the reign of Ming-huang. Another possible reason, and one that touches on the development of T'ang painting in general, is that while such pictures may have been painted after the 750's, they were no longer being painted by the great masters. As we have seen, most of the important painters of the second half of the dynasty were southerners, living far from the court; they were also gentlemen and, so far as their painting was concerned, independents, even expressionists—men who would no more think of painting noble ladies

wandering in a palace garden then they would an imperial campaign against the barbarians. The men who painted such pictures were, for the most part, professionals, incapable of advancing the art or of appealing to scholarly taste. They are passed over in silence by Chu Ching-hsüan and Chang Yen-yüan. This fact—if the very incomplete records are to be relied on—reinforces the view that a split between the literati and the professionals, and the association of one kind of painting with the scholar class, another with the craftsmen, was already taking place in the second half of the T'ang Dynasty.

BEYOND THE FRONTIERS

The lands to the north and west of China have always exerted a powerful influence on the imagination of the Chinese. To all, except for inarticulate soldiers, and pilgrims whose minds were on higher things, they were *terra incognita*, and it is an interesting question to what extent the relatively few pictures of foreign parts were based on direct knowledge, on travellers' tales, or on sheer invention. The growth of the T'ang empire in the seventh century made it urgent for the government to have as much detailed and accurate knowledge about Central Asia as possible. One result of this new interest was the *Illustrated Treatise on the Western Regions* compiled from the work of a number of emissaries who had been sent by Kao-tsung to Samarkand, Tokhāra, and other distant places to study customs and products and to draw maps.⁴¹ All this material was put together by the court historiographical office under the supervision of Hsü Ching-tsung and presented to the throne in 658. Another T'ang work of the same kind, though probably less ambitious, was the *Illustrated Record of the Western Regions* (Hsi-yu t'u-chi) by P'ei Chü.⁴²

The monk Wang Hsüan-tse went to India three times in the reigns of T'ai-tsung (627-649) and Kao-tsung (650-683). He first reached India in 643. On his second journey he took with him a skilled craftsman, Sung Fa-chih, whose chief duty it was to make pictures of famous icons. Two accounts of India and the way thither were written later by Wang Hsüan-tse: the *Hsi-kuo chih* (Record of Western Countries) and the *Chung T'ien-chu hsiang chi* (Record of a Journey to Central India). Both are lost.⁴³ Among the lost or scattered paintings listed by Chang Yen-yüan at the end of Chapter 5 of the *Ming-hua chi* is a set of ten scrolls of Wang Hsüan-tse's *Journey to Western Countries*, Wang Hsüan-tse hsi-kuo hsiang chüan, with three separate scrolls of illustrations entitled *Chung T'ien-chu kuo-t'u* (Pictures of the Kingdom of Central India).

The books of Hsü Ching-tsung and Wang Hsüan-tse must have excited enormous curiosity among those privileged to see them. The art of the Wei-ch'ih family also aroused a good deal of comment. Wei-ch'ih Po-chih-na, a Khotanese painter who came to the court of Sui Wen-ti, painted, according to Chang Yen-yüan, not only Buddhist subjects but also foreign countries (*wai-kuo*). His descendant (probably his grandson) Wei-ch'ih I-seng, active until 710, painted them also, for among the pictures under his name in Hui-tsung's collection was a *Wai-kuo pao-shu t'u*, Picture of Rare (or Precious) Trees from Foreign Countries.⁴⁴ The term *pao-shu* could also refer to the imaginary flowering trees in Buddhist paradise paintings. Nothing is

known of the landscape style of either of these painters; but, although probably not as exotic as their figure painting, it was not purely Chinese, particularly in their use of a heavy impasto to achieve an effect of relief in their painting of trees and flowers.

When Yen Li-pen illustrated the fanciful *Canon of Lao Tzu's Journey to the West* (Lao Tzu hsi-hsing-ching t'u)⁴⁵ and the *Western Regions* (Hsi-yu t'u);⁴⁶ when Yang T'ing-kuang, a contemporary of Wu Tao-tzu, made pictures of Hsüan-tsang's *Hsi-yu chi* on the awnings of the western cloister of Chao-ch'eng Su in Loyang;⁴⁷ and when Chang Hsüan painted *Fu-lin* (the Byzantine Empire)⁴⁸—they must presumably have been influenced by the earlier books of illustrations. Whether their technique was also affected it is impossible to say. Nevertheless, one has the impression that when Chinese artists were depicting foreign parts, as well as foreigners, they sometimes adopted special conventions: a striking example of this was the form of rock or mountain in Six Dynasties Buddhist art called the "Indian crag" in my earlier volume. Another source of inspiration, or information, for painters, would have been the exotic plants brought as tribute to the T'ang court, and painted by Yen Li-pen, among others.

There were other areas, nearer home, which were almost equally inaccessible to painters in metropolitan China. The vast emptiness to the north of the Great Wall, where hordes of often hostile nomads roamed and hunted, inspired a small number of painters, chiefly of hunting scenes in which the featureless landscape played only a subordinate part. The sixth-century artist Feng T'i-chia was a man of Hopei, whose landscapes, according to the *Ming-lua chi*, were "like the scenery beyond the northern frontier."⁴⁹ A century later Li Chien, who held an administrative post in Shansi, specialised in painting "foreign horses, mounted archers shooting eagles, and grazing scenes by rivers and on the plains."⁵⁰ After him came Hu Huai, and his son Hu Chien. Kuo Jo-hsiü noted that the verses of Li I (died 827), among them lines descriptive of the desert landscape of Mongolia, were used by screen painters.⁵¹

Li Chien was said to be specially good at rivers and streams. In these desert landscapes often the only feature that might hold the eye at all was a riverbed snaking back to the horizon, and a few scattered trees. Some of the fresco painters at Tunhuang managed this very effectively from direct observation of the river in the valley below them (plate 24), achieving an effect of continuous recession which artists in the hill terrain of China may never have attempted. Was this because they never saw such streams? Or was it because, like the T'ang poets, they would have found them uninteresting and out of keeping with the kind of landscape composition they aimed to create?

SEASCAPES

The Chinese are not a maritime nation; for them the ocean has been not a highway or a source of livelihood, as it has been to the Japanese, but a boundary. The sea, in the imagination of the Chinese, the vast majority of whom never saw it, was a limitless expanse stretching to the edges of the world. None ever ventured upon it unless of necessity, and of those who did many never

returned. So the ocean was the realm of myth and legend. From the eastern sea rose P'eng-lai, the fairy island that, while visible perhaps on the horizon, could never be reached. In the Han and Six Dynasties, legends about P'eng-lai were a potent source of artistic inspiration. But under the T'ang, when painters were at last able to depict the world of nature as they saw and felt it, the fairy realm of earlier times receded, like P'eng-lai, further into the background, although it was never wholly forgotten; while for the poet, the sea was too remote and unfamiliar to be a door to the understanding of nature or a mirror of human emotion.

There may have been another reason why seascapes appealed so little to the Chinese painter. The essential Chinese landscape, as a paradigm of the world of nature, contains mountains and valleys, streams and clouds, rocks and trees. The artist seldom if ever paints mountains without trees or water, mists without mountains, because these things are inseparable in any meaningful statement about nature. A seascape as such would moreover be extremely difficult to make interesting in terms of the pictorial language at the Chinese painter's command. Yet we do find a few T'ang painters attempting it, although when the word *hai* is used in the title of a picture we cannot always be sure that it means "sea" and not "lake." The seventh-century master Wang T'o-tzu painted a fresco of Mount Sumeru in the midst of ocean waters, *Hsi-mi-shan hai-shui t'u*—a fusion of the Meru and P'eng-lai myths—on the wall of a temple in Ch'ang-an.⁵² Li Chao-tao, according to the *Ming-hua chi*, was the first painter to do really good seascapes. There were two of his pictures of the seashore (*Hai-an t'u*) in Hui-tsung's collection. No copies of them exist. At the end of the T'ang, Chao Te-ch'i in Szechwan did a *Celestial Monarch Crossing the Ocean* (Kuo-hai t'ien-wang hsiang), also in Hui-tsung's collection;⁵³ and pictures of Lohan crossing the sea are attributed in later texts to Wu Tao-tzu's pupil Lu Leng-chia. The well-known late T'ang banner painting from Tunhuang, *Vaiśāvana Crossing the Ocean*, in the British Museum (plate 92) gives some indication of what these pictures might have been like. Here the waves are indicated by regular ripples more or less parallel to each other, as though a breeze was passing over the surface of a lake. While still rather conventionalised, this technique is a good deal more lively and natural than the mechanical overlapping of curved lines by which the waves are indicated in the *Travelling in Springtime* attributed to Chan Tzu-ch'ien (plate 40). A much freer and more vigorous treatment of waves is shown in the landscape before Queen Vaidehī in Cave 172 at Tunhuang (plate 24).

The only painter with any claim to have made a special study of the sea was the mysterious Wang Mo, or Wang Hsia, who requested from Ku K'uang a post in the coastal patrol so that he could "observe the landscape of the sea." One would like to imagine him lashed, like the young Turner, to the mast of a coastguard cutter to study the ever-changing forms of the waves, though it is far more likely that he enjoyed the storms from a safe shelter on the shore. If he ever combined his experience with his extraordinary ink flinging and smearing techniques the results must have been quite as wonderful, in their way, as Turner's late seascapes. Nothing survives of his work—fortunately, not even the kinds of copies and reconstructions by later artists which would mislead us—so we are free to imagine what they must have been like.

SUNSET

The sun plays almost no part in Chinese poetry. It is the source of light and energy, the yang element, and that is all. So the sun almost never appears in Chinese painting; effects of sunlight are not depicted in the sky, and only rarely are they suggested in the warm light on the hills at dawn or sunset. The few exceptions are almost all illustrations to the story of Queen Vaidehi. Anitābha, according to legend, gave the Queen sixteen objects to meditate upon as a spiritual consolation for the brutal refusal of her son Ajātasatru to allow her to look after her husband, King Bimbisara, in prison.⁵⁴ The first of these was a meditation upon the setting sun, as it is that "to which all things that have sight are wont to turn their eyes." The story was a popular one in T'ang Buddhist art, and in a number of caves at Tunhuang it is depicted on long vertical strips on either side of a paradise composition: for example, in Caves 172, 217, and 45 of the "florescent" T'ang and Caves 148 and 320 of the mid T'ang. The Queen sits on a mat out in the open, sometimes holding a censer in her hands, looking across the level desert sands to where the red orb of the sun sinks behind the mountains. In the painting in Cave 172, the river (surely the river at Tunhuang) carries her gaze, and the viewer's eyes, back to the horizon. Here, and in the rendering in Cave 320, the sense of her solitary communion with nature is movingly suggested.

Elsewhere in T'ang art the sunset theme is hard to find. Perhaps the evening scene in Chang Hsün's *Three Times of Day* (page 80) showed a sunset. Two versions of a sunset picture (*Lo-chiao t'u*) attributed to Li Chao-tao were in Hui-tsung's collection;⁵⁵ and Li Ssu-hsün is credited by the Ming critic Chang Ch'ou with having painted a palace garden scene in which "the mountains stand clear and luminous in the light of the setting sun."⁵⁶

A well-known example of the theme is depicted on one of the *biwa* in the Shōsōin (plate 52). In the foreground are musicians and a dancer on an elephant that has emerged from a valley heading westward to where the sun sinks on the horizon, sending its last rays shooting into the sky. A line of birds wing their way forward out of the eye of the setting sun to alight on a sand-spit—a vision of profound peace that seems to anticipate one of the eleventh-century painter Sung Ti's Eight Views of Hsiao and Hsiang—the one entitled *P'ing-sha lo-yen*, Wild Geese Alight on the Level Sand.⁵⁷

RURAL AND VILLAGE SCENES

The Chinese, like the English and the Dutch, have always enjoyed paintings of pasture, village, and farmhouse scenes, partly because they suggest escape from the noise and crowds of the city and the cares of office, perhaps partly also because to the country gentleman the sight of peasants toiling in willing innocence (as he likes to think) to create the setting in which he can relax and reflect is always agreeable. In China such pictures often served as reminders of their homes to men serving in distant provinces, or to describe a place to someone who had never seen it. Chao Meng-fu, for example, painted the celebrated *Autumn Colours in the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains* for a friend whose family came from that district, but who had never been there himself.

Scenes of farming and country pursuits are among the earliest surviving examples of Chinese pictorial art. Inlaid bronze vessels of the late Warring States period depict shooting and mulberry-picking, subjects that may have been popular in contemporary wall-painting. During the Han, such themes as fishing and boating, ploughing, harvesting, and country dancing were depicted in wall-paintings and reliefs in stone and tile. Six tombs of the Wei-Chin period (third to fourth century) at Chia-yü-kuan in Kansu are lined with bricks decorated with paintings, over six hundred in all, depicting every imaginable kind of agricultural and domestic pursuit. Such tomb decorations by their realism and liveliness seem to deny the reality of death; life in the tomb, they suggest, is just like life on earth.⁵⁸

In the Chin Dynasty, Wang I and Tai K'uei painted pictures of village scenes and cattle-herding; in the Liu Sung, Ku Pao-kuang depicted the life of the common people in Yüeh, and Tsung Ping the villages of Yung-chia, the famous beauty-spot on Mount Lu where he had his country house; in the Southern Ch'i, Mao Hui-hsiu painted the scenery and villages of Shan-tung.⁵⁹ Although the time came when the painting of village and peasant life was relegated almost wholly to the professionals, this was not true in the Sui and T'ang. In the sixth century, Tung Po-jen and T'ien Seng-liang both painted farming pictures of rustic life, as did Chan Tzu-ch'ien and Fan Ch'ang-shou a little later.

Later on in the seventh century, however, the number of these pictures seems to have diminished, until in the oeuvre of the great eighth-century masters they hardly figure at all. As landscape painting became fully expressive as a poetic language, the representation of the real world became less literal, less informative. When Wang Wei on rare occasions painted village life, his pictures, we may assume, were suffused and transfigured by poetic feeling. If his rendering of the Wang-ch'uan had been a literal one it would have not been the work of a gentleman, and would not have become the source of inspiration to generation after generation of scholar painters. However, the process whereby the painting of rural life was eventually to split into two traditions—the scholars painting it for its symbolic or associative value in purely general and conventional terms, the professionals depicting it accurately or satirically as a source of information or entertainment—was a slow one, and in the mid-eighth century this distinction did not yet exist.⁶⁰ Han Huang (723–787), a scholar who rose to be a member of the Council of State, was a clever and accurate painter of village and farmhouse scenes, popular genre subjects, and water buffaloes.⁶¹ Han's follower Tai Sung, on the other hand, who served under him and modelled his art closely on his, was evidently a man of humble origin, one of the new class of specialists.⁶² Although he painted farm scenes, he devoted practically the whole of his energy to buffaloes, a theme mercifully outside the scope of this book.

No paintings survive today which can claim any useful connection with the work of T'ang painters of farmhouse scenes. Even Tunhuang fails us, for the little vignettes of ploughing so often reproduced belong chiefly to a later period, and in any case are so naive as to be of little help, while the scrolls attributed to Tai Sung all appear to be works of the Sung Dynasty or later. It is perhaps more useful to consider tenth-century and Northern Sung paintings, such as the remarkable scroll entitled *Early Snow on the River* and attributed to Chao Kan and the genre

details in the foreground of the *Travellers in the Mountains*, attributed to Kuan T'ung,⁶³ and infer from them what T'ang painters of these themes would have had to achieve to make such pictures possible. Both these paintings may be of later date, but they at least suggest the kind of naturalism in the treatment of farmhouse and rustic scenes for which earlier T'ang masters such as Han Huang were striving. More than this one cannot say.

BAMBOO

Bamboo painting in China has become so closely identified with the literati that one might expect it to have developed as an art form during the T'ang Dynasty, when both the attitudes and the techniques appropriate to scholarly painting were beginning to crystallise. Yet before we come to Ch'eng Hsiu-chi and Hsiao Yüeh, early in the ninth century, we do not encounter a single painter who made a speciality of bamboo painting, and very few who included it in their oeuvres. A handful of artists painted, among other subjects, bamboo and flowers, bamboo and cranes, bamboo and rocks, bamboo and fowls, but pure bamboo not at all. Nor is there any hint that bamboo yet bears for the scholar gentleman the powerful associations with unbreakable pliancy and moral rectitude that it carried in the Sung Dynasty.

The earliest bamboo painter of the T'ang Dynasty—there are none recorded under the Sui—was, according to the meagre records, Yüan-ch'ang, a younger brother of the Emperor T'ai-tsung and prince of Han, a specialist in horses, game birds, and bamboos and fowl.⁶⁴ Fifty years later, the scholar official Hsieh Ch'i, active as a calligrapher and painter between about 680 and 715, included in his oeuvre cranes and bamboo. Chang Yen-yüan says that Hsieh Ch'i invented the six-panel screen with cranes, but we are told nothing of his style.⁶⁵ One of his contemporaries was Yin Chung-jung, a scholarly official, son and grandson of scholarly painters, who held a variety of official posts, including that of assistant director of the Imperial Library, under the Empress Wu (683-705). He did birds and flowers, and bamboos and trees. Chang Yen-yüan notes that "sometimes he would use ink, and its hues were as if he were combining the five colours."⁶⁶ This is not said with particular reference to Hsieh Ch'i's bamboo painting, but it is important as possibly the earliest reference to a scholar and calligrapher painting in graded washes of monochrome ink.

Masters of the reign of Ming-huang who sometimes painted bamboo and flowers together were Wei Wu-r'ien and Han Kan, both of whom were better known for their horse paintings, and it is doubtful whether they contributed much to the development of the art. If bamboo painting had been a high art form in the eighth century it is hard to imagine that the great Chang Tsao would not have been an exponent of it. But no T'ang source mentions him in this connection, and the earliest reference we have seems to be to a *Monk(s) amid Pines and Bamboo* attributed to Chang Tsao in Hui-tsung's catalogue.

That Wang Wei painted bamboo on occasion is clear from the cycle of poems he wrote about his beloved Wang-ch'uan estate. Two of them suggest themselves, "Bamboo Hall," and "Bamboo Grove House," which runs:

I sit alone in the dark bamboos
 Play my lute and sing and sing
 Deep in the woods where no one knows I am
 But the bright moon comes and shines on me there.⁶⁷

And the description of the Wang-ch'uan in the *Old T'ang History*, Chiu T'ang Shu speaks of its "bamboo-covered islets."⁶⁸ While not even acceptable copies remain to suggest how Wang Wei painted bamboo, we gain a vivid impression from Su Tung-p'o's poem comparing the art of Wang Wei with that of Wu Tao-tzu. The lines beginning "The Chi Yüan monks are frail . . ." show that of the two, Su Tung-p'o clearly prefers Wang Wei.⁶⁹ He must have known the work of both masters only by repute or through copies. By his time, however, the legend of Wang Wei's supreme mastery among T'ang landscape painters was already taking shape, largely promoted by Su Tung-p'o himself.

Bamboo painting seems to have been more popular in the second half of the dynasty, particularly among the painters of the Chiangnan region and of Szechwan—naturally, perhaps, for in those areas the plant grows in greater abundance and variety than in the north. Chu Shen, a native of Wu who was well known as a landscape painter in the 780's, counted bamboo among his accomplishments,⁷⁰ as did Li Ling-sheng.⁷¹ When Tu Fu was in Chengtu in the autumn of 760 he met Wei Yen, a scholarly recluse and somewhat individualistic painter of landscapes. Early sources mention Wei Yen's mastery in the painting of old pines and rocks, and bamboo and trees, and one of his bamboo paintings was in Hui-tsung's collection.

Far more important than these was Hsiao Yüeh, born in Hangchow in the middle years of the eighth century. He was an old man when, in 823-824, he met Po Chü-i in Hangchow. In Waley's words: "Now well over seventy, his hand shook and his eyes were dim, but he still ranked as the greatest bamboo painter of his day."⁷² "Hsiao was very loth," wrote Po Chü-i, "to part with his paintings and people have often tried for a whole year to acquire one of them without succeeding in getting so much as a single stem. But he knew I had an innate love of such things, and suddenly one day he painted a clump of fifteen stems and gave them to me as a present. As a token of my gratitude for his kindness and admiration I made this song," which begins:

Among all growing things
 bamboos are hardest to render.
 Ancients and moderns have painted them
 but none are really bamboos.
 But when Hsiao sets brush to silk
 he alone presses close to Reality.
 Of those who have sought them by painting
 there is only this one man!⁷³

Po Chü-i describes how, by comparison with the dead-looking plants of other artists, Hsiao Yüeh's are intensely alive:

If one looks up suddenly one forgets that one is looking at
a picture and not at real bamboo

One fancies one can hear the rustle of their leaves . . . ⁷⁴

Hsiao Yüeh is the first Chinese artist, to my knowledge, whose fame rested entirely on his bamboo painting. Although Chu Ching-hsüan ranks him in the lowest class, Chang Yen-yüan notes that "he was skilled in doing bamboos in monochrome (*i se*, one colour), which were extremely refined."⁷⁵ Hui-tsung's catalogue lists four of his bamboo paintings and notes that this was the only subject he liked to paint, and that he penetrated deep into the bamboo's very nature. Li K'an, the Yüan scholar official who wrote the definitive manual on the bamboo, said that bamboo painting began in Ming-huang's time, and that the tradition was established by Hsiao Yüeh; he noted that he owned a bamboo painting in colour by Hsiao Yüeh but that it was so badly damaged that he could not copy it.⁷⁶ From time to time painters have rendered bamboo in colour—generally monochrome red or blue—but this technique, which may have begun with Hsiao Yüeh, has hardly, in recent times at least, been considered "extremely refined."

Ch'eng Hsiu-chi (whose dates have been determined as 804–863 from his recently discovered tomb tablet)⁷⁷ was a southerner who, according to Chu Ching-hsüan, "was the only individual in the capital who owed his advancement [he was as a young man a protégé of Chou Fang in Yüeh-chou and later a court painter in the capital] solely to his activity as a painter. He painted bamboos on a screen for the Wen-szu Hall of the Palace for which the Emperor (whether Hsüan-tsung, 847–860, or I-tsung, 860–874, is not certain) wrote a poem."⁷⁸ He seems to have been an out-and-out professional.

Very different, and much closer to our idea of the Chinese bamboo painter, was Sun Wei, who from the records seems to have been, in a general sense, the successor of Hsiao Yüeh. A native of Chekiang, Sun Wei had done frescoes in Ch'ang-an before he went to Szechwan with the T'ang court in the Kuang-ming era (885–888) and made his home in Chengtu. He was a Taoist, a calligrapher, and something of a bohemian. He was good at painting figures, dragons in water, pines and rocks, and bamboo in monochrome ink, writes Kuo Jo-hsü. "His brush strength had a wild strangeness; his successes did not lie in his handling of colours."⁷⁹ Huang Hsiu-fu, in his account of late T'ang painters in Szechwan, places him alone in the highest *i* (*untrammelled*) class,⁸⁰ as did Jen Hsien in his lost work *Kuang-hua hsün-chi*, cited by Kuo Jo-hsü. Although Huang Hsiu-fu lists several of Sun Wei's bamboo paintings, including one of pines, rocks, and ink bamboo in the Ch'ao-hsüeh temple, the account of his style is not very precise. But if he brought to his bamboo the same freedom and power that he brought to his landscapes—two centuries later Su Tung-p'o wrote of his "rushing torrents and raging waves breaking against rocks and twisting around mountain shores"—his bamboo paintings must have been striking indeed.

These references to isolated talents in the art of bamboo painting in the T'ang Dynasty do not suggest a clearly developing tradition. The exponents of the art, professional and amateur, are scattered through the dynasty in no direct line. The fact that we do not read in any T'ang source—as we do of landscape painting—that a particular style or technique of bamboo painting was handed down from one painter to another suggests that even in the mid-ninth century, when Chang Yen-yüan and Chu Ching-hsüan were writing, no such tradition yet existed, although individual masters such as Hsiao Yüeh and Sun Wei were laying the foundation for it.

EXOTIC PLANTS

The expansion of the T'ang empire, trade, the flood of tribute that flowed into the court so long as China was powerful, and the requirements of Buddhist iconography were all factors in the tremendous enrichment of the vocabulary of trees and plants in T'ang art. Buddhist texts, such as the descriptions of the paradises in the *Sukkhāvāṭī vyūha*, were quite specific as to what trees and plants had to be represented. Some of these trees, such as the *sāl* (it was between twin *sāl* trees that Śākyamuni entered Nirvāṇa), did not reach China until the end of the T'ang period; yet they were all being more or less faithfully depicted in the art of the T'ang Dynasty, and in some cases even earlier. Painters such as Yang Ch'i-tan, Yang Hui-chih, and Lu Leng-chia would have been hard put to depict the Mahāparinirvāṇa with any degree of accuracy without the aid of the pictures brought back from India by Buddhist pilgrims, those drawn on the spot by Chinese visitors, and those painted in China by foreign artists such as Wei-ch'ih Po-chih-na. Some of the ways in which Chinese artists handled these trees are discussed in the section on trees and plants below, Chapter VIII and plates R50-60.

In addition to the pictures, some artists must have seen the exotic plants imported by the court and wealthy families, or sent as tribute. The scroll in the Palace Museum entitled *Foreign Tribute Bearers*, which may possibly be a late squeezed-up version of a much longer composition originally by Yen Li-pen, shows exotic plants carried along the road by men whose origin in several different parts of Asia is clearly shown in their features and dress.⁸¹

Many imported trees and shrubs were grown in the palace and temple gardens and on the estates of the wealthy families; and there were more elaborate displays, such as the wooden garden on wheels made by the gentlemen of Yang Kuei-fei's brother's household, on which were planted "renowned flowers and strange trees." This flowering carriage, shown to the public in spring, rotated as it moved, like the ancient drums depicted in Han tomb relief and wall-paintings.⁸²

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS ON PLANTS

Handbooks on plants are at least as old as the famous *Pen-ts'ao kang-mu*, compiled by T'ao Hung-ching, the sixth-century Taoist scholar, recluse, and intimate of Liang Wu Ti. It is not

known whether this book was illustrated, but it probably was.⁸³ It may be recalled that one of the oldest Chinese paintings yet discovered, the famous silk square from Ch'ang-sha (fourth to fifth century B.C.), shows calendrical or auspicious plants very carefully drawn. Among the "ancient and secret" scrolls listed by Chang Yen-yüan as having been lost or scattered before his time, some of which may have been of pre-T'ang date, were several *pen-ts'ao* (basic herbs, or *materia medica*) that were certainly illustrated. Illustrated *pen-ts'ao* were also produced in the T'ang Dynasty. The official T'ang handbook was the *Hsin-hsin pen-ts'ao* (Basic Herbs Compiled Anew), compiled in 659, but better known in a later edition, *T'ang pen-ts'ao*, by Su Ching.⁸⁴ This was an improvement on the *Pen-ts'ao kang-nün* because it included new material both on southern plants and on those of north China which had not been accessible to T'ao Hung-ching in sixth-century Nanking.

Before the *Hsin-hsin pen-ts'ao* appeared, Wang Ting (580-668) had done the illustrations to a book called *Pictures of Basic Herbs Recommended and To Be Avoided*, *Pen-ts'ao hsün-chai t'u*, commissioned in 627.⁸⁵ Nothing is known about this book, but we can assume that the drawings were carefully done, for Wang Ting was director of the imperial ateliers (*Shang-fang*) and was famous in his day, chiefly as a painter of Buddhist subjects. Chang Yen-yüan agrees with the monk Ts'ung that he was somewhat lacking in "bone-breath" (*ku-ch'i*)—vigour—but Chu Ching-hsüan has a higher opinion of him.

Such botanical works, while of little aesthetic significance, may have provided artists with some relatively systematic reference material for tree, plant, and flower painting and thus may be seen as predecessors of later painting manuals such as *The Mustard Seed Garden*.

PAINTING AND WRITING

The idea of writing on a painting, or of painting a picture to accompany a written text of some sort, is in China almost as old as the art of painting itself; but in the T'ang Dynasty it takes on a new and deeper meaning. Hitherto, so far as we know, when pictures and writing appeared together, the pictures were generally illustrations to the text, or the text captions to the pictures. But in the T'ang Dynasty, when painting finally emerges as a fully expressive art in its own right, a more subtle relationship is established between the two arts through the medium of a third—calligraphy.

The gentleman might write his thoughts or, if appropriate, paint them; these were just two ways of conveying the same ideas and feelings. As Su Tung-p'o said of Wang Wei, "in his poem is a painting, in his painting a poem."⁸⁶ The supreme T'ang example of this is of course Wang Wei's Wang-ch'uan scroll, in which words and pictures complement each other, each expressing what the other could not. What more natural than that a poem should give birth to a painting—such as Chang Chih-ho's handscroll, inspired by the verses Yen Chen-ch'ing sent him—that a painting should beget a poem, or that with calligraphy they should form one unified work of art? When Cheng Ch'ien submitted to Ming Huang a painting with a poem written on it in his own hand, the Emperor inscribed on it "Cheng Ch'ien san chüeh," Cheng Ch'ien's triple masterpiece (or three perfections), for it combined the three arts.⁸⁷

It seems that for a T'ang artist to write a poetic inscription on his own painting was something comparatively new. We do however find a few references to the custom in T'ang texts. Wang Wei did a landscape, in a private collection in Chu Ching-hsüan's day, which had an inscription by the painter; and Chu reports that Chang Tsao did landscapes on a wall in Pao-ming Ssu and added an inscription in his own hand.⁸⁸ Screens covered with calligraphy were popular in the T'ang period, and it is possible that at this time writing on pictures was more common on walls and screens than on silk scrolls, though this is a guess. In the Sung Dynasty it seems still not to have been the general custom for the artist to write more than a brief inscription on his own painting, although of course the small intimate pictures which gentlemen painted for each other, and on which they may have written at much greater length, are all lost, and nothing useful can be said about them.

It was less uncommon to write a personal or laudatory inscription (*t'i-pa*) on a picture painted by someone else. There are many instances of this. On one of Tao-fen's landscapes, for example, Ku K'uang wrote a laudatory poem, quoted in Chapter V. The early ninth-century poet Fang Kan wrote inscriptions for several paintings by the Kiangsu expressionists Hsiang Chu and Hsiang Hsin.⁸⁹ On Ch'eng Hsiu-chi's screen of bamboo for the Wen-ssu Hall mentioned above, the Emperor composed a poem which runs:

Here the subtle mind of a fine artist has resolved.
Cunning at such a height seems truly inspired.
When brought to be looked over near a window,
Its tangled shadows merge, then grow light again.⁹⁰

Chu Ching-hsüan reports that the Academicians all wrote sequels, following the same rhyme pattern; but he does not say whether they were written on the screen itself.

When Tu Fu was in Chengtu in 760 he saw a good deal of Wei Yen, who painted two horses on the plaster wall of Tu Fu's new house; the poet then wrote a verse on the wall beside them, which a neighbour seems to have liked so much that he asked Tu Fu to compose and write another on a landscape scroll by Wang Tsai which he had hanging in his own house.⁹¹ Was this perhaps the famous "Lines Playfully Written on a Landscape by Wang Tsai" quoted on page 78, which gives so delightful a picture of that artist's rich imagination and painstaking style?

We do not know how many of the recorded T'ang poems about paintings were actually written on the paintings or their mounts. The handscroll format could accommodate any number of colophons, and many of the pieces in prose and verse that have survived may originally have been attached to particular paintings. Yüan Chen, Fu Tsai, and Po Chü-i all wrote poetry or prose descriptive of the pines and rocks painted by Chang Tsao, while it is only through the writings of Tu Fu that anything at all is known of the work of Li Tsun-shih.⁹²

Space, Form, and Technique in Sui and T'ang Landscape Painting

With so much material surviving from the T'ang, we should be in a position to show how the T'ang artist mastered space and composition. But few surviving T'ang paintings are pure landscapes, and none of them are attributable to known artists, while the Tunhuang landscapes are no more than background to figure subjects. Rather than weary the reader with apologies for the paucity of material, I shall enumerate briefly the kinds of compositions that seem to have been popular:

1. The diagonal stretching back to the left into the distance, with a spur in the lower left foreground (plate 40). This will become a stock convention in Chinese landscape painting.
2. Cliffs rising sheer up one side, generally the left, of a vertical panel, opening up a vista to the horizon on the other side. This is an effective way of suggesting distance while concentrating on the figures at the base of the cliff (plates 24, 28, 30, 50, and 75).
3. Cliffs on both sides, with a deep vista in the centre (plates 27, 52). The upper corners of some of the walls of the Tunhuang caves are filled with such landscapes, which have been pushed far apart to make room for the Buddha assembly, creating a vast expanse suggestive of the Buddha's heavenly abode.
4. A tripartite mountain with a central massif flanked by smaller hills (plates 43 and 56). This, as I showed in *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China*, is an ancient convention.
5. Growing out of this, the central massif rears up to dominate the picture space, while the lesser peaks gather about its feet (plates 51, 103, and 114), giving a piled-up effect of ever-increasing complexity and monumentality, leading to the great classic compositions of Fan K'uan and Kuo Hsi.
6. Finally, there is quite another way of handling the landscape that was already visible in the Han Dynasty tomb wall-paintings in Liao-yang. There the horsemen gallop across a featureless

expanse, defining space by their very presence. In the paintings in the tomb-shaft of Chang Huai (plates 47 and 48), the T'ang artist further defines the space with hills, rocks, and trees, although he does not manage the scale very well. These panels, of which only details have as yet been published, probably reflect a style of landscape painting appropriate for palace walls and large standing screens.

In *The Birth* I outlined a vocabulary of Six Dynasties landscape forms. As there was practically no original landscape painting extant, it was permissible, indeed necessary, to draw upon such things as stone reliefs and engravings, in which the essential forms could be reproduced in line drawings. For the T'ang we are a little better off, and all my examples are from actual paintings or copies of them. That they are hardly representative of the best of T'ang painting is obvious; yet cumulatively they do give a picture of period style and technique, and of the enriching of the artist's vocabulary. This chapter and the next are thus a pocket dictionary to a language of which we still only know a few words. When eventually the wall-paintings in undisturbed T'ang tombs such as the mausoleum of Kao-tsung and Wu Tse-t'ien are revealed, it should be possible to add materially to this language. If in the following pages the technical analysis seems to be more minute than the pictures deserve (and many of them have little aesthetic merit), that is because we are still witnessing the efforts of early painters to master the language. From the Northern Sung onwards, such an approach would not be justified, because we would be dealing not with progress but with change—in purpose, emphasis, meaning. For the T'ang, however, we must still think in terms of progress towards the goal of a completely convincing and expressive technique; and every detail tells us something of how that goal was achieved, and of the failures along the way.

The material is handled in the following way. First, I have divided it into two parts: the basic stuff of landscape painting—mountains, rocks, and terrain generally, out of which space and form are created; and the trees and vegetation that clothe it. Second, I have divided the era under review into three periods, corresponding to the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries: these periods are discussed immediately below. Third, within each period the technique of landscape painting is analysed under three headings, which I have called the BONELESS, the LINEAR, and the PAINTERLY. It need hardly be said that all these classifications are for convenience only and should not be taken too literally; that the style of the seventh century shades into that of the eighth, the linear technique into the painterly. But they have been adopted because, as will be seen, they do correspond, very broadly, to the way in which, from the evidence we have, landscape painting during the Sui and T'ang dynasties developed.

It is customary when dealing with a long period in art history to divide it into successive stages. Precedents for this in China are ancient and respectable. Chang Yen-yüan himself divided the epochs in painting up to his day into four periods.¹ In the Yüan Dynasty, Yang Shih-hung divided T'ang literature into four stages which have become hallowed by tradition: 619-712 *Ch'u* (Early) T'ang; 713-765 *Sheng* (Florescent) T'ang; 766-826 *Chung* (Middle) T'ang; 827-897 *H'an* (Late) T'ang.² During the Ch'ing Dynasty, the poet and scholar Wang Shih-chen proposed, in his *Yü-yang wen-ta*, three periods for T'ang poetry: 619-712, Early; 713-805, Middle;

806-897, Late.³ Kiang Kang-hu, in the introduction to his translation of the T'ang anthology *The Jade Mountain*, proposed four stages, dating roughly as follows: 620-700; 700-780; 780-850; 850-900. He calls the second period the Summer, the other three by implication being allotted to Spring, Autumn, and Winter, a scheme followed by John C. H. Wu in his anthology *The Four Seasons of T'ang Poetry*. In spite of its suspicious neatness, this periodisation in fact fits not only the poetry but the cultural life of the T'ang as a whole, and is even of some value in our limited knowledge of T'ang landscape painting.

The Tunhuang Research Institute employs the following chronology for the dating of the paintings in the Tunhuang caves: I: 618-712 Early T'ang; II: 712-765 Florescent T'ang; III: 766-820 Middle T'ang; IV: 820-860 Late T'ang.⁴ When Chang Ta-ch'ien copied wall-paintings at Tunhuang in 1942-1944, one of his collaborators, the painter Hsieh Chih-liu, devised another system which takes some account of historical events, but is otherwise unsatisfactory: I: 618-684 (to end of Kao-tsung's reign); II: 685-741 (Empress Wu and most of Ming-huang's reign); III: 746-755 (period of political disasters); IV: 756-860 (restoration and decline).⁵

Should we attempt any kind of period division at all? A serious objection is that a division based on the literature of painting would suggest one pattern, while one based on the surviving pictures, chiefly wall-paintings from Tunhuang, would suggest another. For example, some of the most interesting developments, according to the texts, were taking place in China in the second half of the eighth century, when the landscape art of Tunhuang was in decline as a result of the Tibetan conquest. The effects of political events, moreover, such as the An Lu-shan Rebellion, and the suppression of Buddhism in 845, were felt differently by different classes of painter. The court painters would no doubt have suffered considerably from the decline of court patronage after 756, and the fresco-painters from the destruction of the monasteries; whereas the southern independents and eccentrics would hardly have been affected at all. If we must have period divisions, then one based, very roughly, on centuries would seem to be the most helpful.

The seventh century, then, may be seen as the period of breaking away from the artificial, elegant style of the sixth century—as the period when a new sense of space and a new breadth of design were achieved. Now for the first time (at least in wall-painting) different styles and techniques can be distinguished.

In the eighth century these new trends in technique and the handling of space were further refined and enriched, so that it may be legitimate to speak of a climax having been achieved by the middle of the century in north China. At the same time, independent artists, particularly in the southeast, were beginning to evolve revolutionary techniques based on a free play of monochrome ink; these techniques came into their own in the second half of the century.

The ninth century is a period of fragmentation. The orthodox schools of the north declined, while the individualists, chiefly in the southeast and in Szechwan, practiced their expressionist techniques with ever greater abandon, often in the service of Zen Buddhism.

The stylistic divisions which I have, for want of better terms, called the boneless, the linear, and the painterly, also require some explanation. I have, of course, borrowed the latter two from Wölfflin, but use them here in quite a different way.

In boneless painting—a literal translation of *mo-ku hua*—forms are defined in washes of ink or colour without outlines (plates 9, 12, and 19, for example). The origins of the technique are not altogether clear. The decoration of one of the wooden coffins from Ma-wang-tui Tomb I (about 190–180 B.C.) is carried out in a technique that might be described as boneless. When it appears at Tunhuang in the fifth century it is used in a manner that shows strong Near Eastern or Central Asian influence, and throughout the sixth century and the T'ang it remains, as a landscape technique, on the outer fringes of Chinese art: there is no trace of it, for example, in the T'ang tomb paintings so far published. The term *mo-ku-hua* was first used, however, in the tenth century, for flower painting. As a landscape technique in China, using opaque mineral colours—chiefly azurite blue and malachite green—it seems to have died out by the Sung Dynasty, but in the meantime it had been carried to Japan, where it became the technique of the Yamato-e landscape tradition—often regarded as a uniquely Japanese creation.⁶

The style I call linear is that in which space and form are clearly defined by the drawn line, even though colour or ink wash may have been added afterwards (plates 39 and 40). It is essentially the style of the scroll painter and the miniaturist rather than the decorator of walls. Its origins can be traced back in a direct line through Ku K'ai-chih to the paintings on silk of the Warring States and Western Han unearthed from Changsha. In its uncoloured form, sometimes called *pai-miao* (plain drawing) or *pai-hua*, this technique was used chiefly for figures and architectural painting. The purest example in landscape of our period is the rendering of the trees in the Sui Cave 296 at Tunhuang (plate R37), where the hills by contrast are painted in the boneless manner. The linear style continues, often highly coloured, as *kung-pi hua* (meticulous brushwork painting) or *ch'ing-lü shan-shui* (green and blue landscapes), down through the academic and professional schools—Chan Tzu-ch'ien, Li Chao-tao, Chao Po-chü, Ch'iu Ying, for example—to modern times.

By painterly I mean, not as Wölfflin meant it, the dissolution of form in colour and tone, but a fully-integrated combination of line and wash. The line, articulated and calligraphic, is both descriptive of form and texture, and expressive of feeling. It has a broken rhythm, and thus modulates naturally into the broken interior washes of ink, or colour, or both, which further enrich and articulate the form. This technique, associated with the mysterious term *p'o-mo* (broken ink), was used chiefly for paintings on silk or paper (plates 71, 75, and 77, for example) and was, broadly speaking, the style of the great landscape masters Wang Wei and Chang Tsao. It does not seem from the available evidence that the brushstrokes of the painterly style had developed into a conventional repertory of *ts'un fa* (wrinkles or texture strokes) before the end of the T'ang period. Such a repertory evolved in the tenth and eleventh centuries, presumably as the codification by their followers of the individual techniques of great masters such as Ching Hao, Li Ch'eng, and Kuan T'ung.

In his important chapter on the brushwork of Ku K'ai-chih and Lu T'an-wei, Chang Seng-yu and Wu Tao-tzu, Chang Yen-yüan draws a sharp comparison between the technique of Ku and Lu on the one hand and Chang and Wu on the other. The brushwork of Ku and Lu is

"dense," "fine and complete," "thorough and exact"—my linear style. That of Chang and Wu is "sparse," "incomplete"; Chang Seng-yu "made his dots, drag strokes, hack-strokes, and sweeping strokes, in accordance with Lady Wei's 'Battle Array of the Brush,' so that every dot and every stroke was an art in itself"; Wu Tao-tzu "broke up and left spaces between his dots and strokes," all "without resorting to line-brush (*chieh-pi*) or ruler"—my painterly style.⁷ All these masters were primarily figure painters, but this distinction between the linear and the painterly styles is equally applicable to landscape painting.

The boneless style is particularly suitable for the decoration of large wall surfaces where mountains so painted form by contrast an effective background and setting for human figures, painted inevitably in a more precise manner. The linear style places great emphasis upon skill and precision. While the boneless decorator's style seems to have died out in China, or rather to have been absorbed into the painterly style, the linear kept its identity, becoming increasingly identified with academicians and professionals, and with those artists like Ch'en Hung-shou who painted in an archaic manner. The painterly style, because it had its basis in the expressive, calligraphic brushstroke, became, and always thereafter remained, the style of the gentlemen painters, the mainstream, influencing all painting through its prestige as the style of the elite.

THE SUI DYNASTY AND THE SEVENTH CENTURY

1. *The Boneless Style*

In *The Birth* I explored the dynamics of the early handscroll, and showed how by setting successive events of a story in landscapes, and linking the landscapes in a natural way, a continuous perspective was inevitably achieved. We do not need to cover this ground again. But I would like to make one or two further comments on the pre-T'ang material, because better reproductions are now available; and to show both that the process of evolution was continuous and that there is some overlapping of styles and techniques in the sixth and seventh centuries.

The Sui caves at Tunhuang illustrate different approaches to the problem of how to organise a horizontal picture area. In Cave 423 the ceiling is treated as a series of cells linked together like a kind of chain (plate 1). The rows of humped hills of which the links are formed are archaic; but there is an attempt here to get away from the superimposed tiers of handscrolls, which were the best solution that the decorators of Cave 428 could offer, and see the area as a whole. This, in spite of its crudity, is something new at Tunhuang. Less radical as all-over decoration but much more interesting pictorially are the ceiling decorations of Cave 296 (plate 2). Although the area is divided up into handscroll strips, within each band depth is suggested in several ways: by placing buildings at angles, by varying the size of elements according to distance, by using a foreground tree on a rock and a river winding forward from back to front.

The decorator of Cave 419 (plate 3) fills the picture space so completely with a riot of syncopated shapes and colours that he loses all sense of depth, such recession as there is being provided only by the architecture, the possibilities of which seem to have fascinated him.

Buildings set at crazy angles, in some cases surrounded by zigzag walls, jostle each other for elbow room. Although the composition is much too congested to give any sense of space, the artist is unusually interested in the building as a three-dimensional object in itself; thus—and this is rare in Chinese painting, except in pure architectural subjects—space is here defined in terms of the objects that occupy it, rather than being felt as an undefined ambient in which objects exist.

In the earlier volume I stressed the importance of this ceiling in Cave 419 in which, although it is conceived basically as superimposed bands of landscape, here and there trees and buildings thrust their way through into the adjacent zone. Not only does this link two zones decoratively but it establishes a spatial relationship, so that the lower tree or building is seen as nearer than the one above. For as soon as the rigid strips begin to break down, every space cell, every building, rock, or tree becomes related, willy-nilly, to its neighbours above and below and on either side. Once this has happened, the overall decoration of a wall with a single unified composition inevitably follows.

By contrast, the ceiling of Cave 420, painted by a different hand at about the same time, is sheer chaos. With the disappearance of the superimposed handscrolls all organisation has gone. Anything can happen, and does, the only purpose being, it seems, to crowd in as many incidents as possible. The section in plate 4 illustrates a number of familiar scenes from the Lotus Sūtra: on the right below, the dialogue between Mañjuśrī and Vimalakīrti; a preaching scene in the centre; the Miracle of the Śrūpa above. Other incidents from the Lotus are on the left. A huge mountain thrusts its way up between them (compare the Ingakyō, plate 73), its summit in the shape of a bird—perhaps an allusion to the Vulture Peak (compare *The Birth*, drawing 28 following page 140, stele of A.D. 527). In another area (plate 5) the chaos is cloven by the river which comes from nowhere and is stopped by a mountain, and bears the drowning men saved by the intercession of Avalokiteśvara. The decoration in this cave is reminiscent of the congested designs of Cave 254 (Northern Wei) in which landscape likewise played a very subordinate part. In both cases there is strong non-Chinese influence.

The confusion and lack of definable space in Cave 419, the decorative colour scheme, the restless dynamic line shimmering over the surface as though the whole ceiling were aflame, all combine to give it a purely abstract beauty and unity, like that of early Renaissance wall-painting in Italy, that is much more than the sum of its parts. In *The Birth*, I pointed out how much this quality was due to Central Asian and ultimately Near Eastern influence, a factor in Chinese wall-painting that was now about to disappear for ever. Yet at the same time the lively crowding of these paintings may possibly reflect the confidence and prosperity that followed the reunification of China under the Sui and must have touched Tunhuang, though not yet to the extent of having much influence on the technique of painting itself.

Of the seventh-century T'ang caves, we shall consider the decoration of Cave 332 first, not because these are known to be among the earliest T'ang landscapes, but because they retain some very archaic features not fully assimilated into the new style. The wall behind the standing figure in plate 6 is decorated freely and yet lucidly. In the lower half is a dramatic scene (a Buddha

preaching from an open coffin, and divinities and worshippers moving round a closed coffin). Other groups of divinities wind down out of the hills above, while in the distance (plate 7) a cavalry battle (the Fight for the Relics?) is depicted with tremendous verve. The diminution of the figures is handled quite successfully, and the picture space as a whole has an openness, a breadth and freedom that is something quite new at Tunhuang. At the same time the artist has sketched in his landscape with broad sweeps of the brush very different from the congested or broken-up treatment of earlier caves. On the other hand, in certain places the mountains are outlined in a very old-fashioned way in darker mineral blue with pointed wave-like bands or shapes like wishbones, a convention that can be traced back through the Six Dynasties into the semi-abstract volutes of Han decorative art (*The Birth*, page 48, figures 2 d, e, f).

In Cave 321 (plate 8) the archaic volutes have melted away into the contours. The long, sweeping strokes in colour are interrupted here and there by humped green mountains clothed crudely, and probably as an afterthought, with a shorthand for trees. Over a large area in the detail in plate 9 there is a real feeling for space and recession; and an ancient device which in *The Birth* I called the coming-round-the-mountain theme is used to good effect in depicting the squadron of cavalry behind the hill. The line, as a means of defining the mountains and terrain generally, has almost entirely disappeared, and form is defined in washes of colour alone.

Sections of two walls from Cave 323 are illustrated here. Plate 10 shows a deep landscape panel above standing figures of the Seven Buddhas of the Past. Pelliot's photograph does not do justice to this beautiful composition, which includes scenes from the Lotus Sūtra and, at lower left, Chang Ch'ien crossing the desert with his retinue. The landscape fills the whole area up to the horizon, but there is no crowding, the rival claims of individual incidents in their space cells and of the overall design being beautifully balanced. Everything has its point, and the effect is both dramatic and harmonious. There is a natural transition from this to the decoration of the whole wall or a vertical panel. The detail in plate 12 with monks worshipping a pagoda shows how successfully the artist has contrasted and reconciled the firm, solid drawing of the figures and the tower with the easy flow of the hills, executed in colour wash without outline. The design on the upper half of the left (plate 11) wall is dominated by a boat carrying two standing Buddha images that moves majestically across the water attended by worshipping monks and laymen. Behind, the open landscape stretches far back into the distance, the figures diminishing in size towards the horizon. Upper left, a flaming jewel sends its rays streaming out across the desert. (Is this the vision that the monk Lo-tsun saw at Tunhuang in 366?) To the right of it men have come out of a desert fort and stand in wonder, while to the left a monk in a boat turns back with outstretched arms to gaze in awe upon the miracle. The easy flow of the artist's brush, the wave-like rhythm of the mountains, the feeling of breadth and distance, the light-filled atmosphere, the exquisite colour—these are unmatched at Tunhuang.

Here we have quite left behind the precious style of the sixth century, and Chan Tzu-ch'ien's rocks that looked as if they had been "carved and hollowed out like the axe-blade edges of melting ice." It seems as though a painter of a new local school has at last found a way of

translating into fresco painting the treeless desert wastes that stretched out before the door of his cave. Was it perhaps the very bareness of the terrain that gave birth to the style? Certainly the lack of trees enabled the painter to sweep his brush over the surface without interruption, giving the whole a rhythmic unity, like a rough sea, that would be broken by buildings or vegetation (plate 13). One might put it another way, and say that only by clearing away the trees and rocks, buildings and walls that cluttered up the Sui wall-paintings was it possible to create a convincing feeling of space, and a harmonious landscape that filled the whole panel.

It might be tempting to think that this revolutionary style was created at Tunhuang itself, and to some extent this may be true. A local tradition of "desert painting" distinct from the schools of metropolitan China very likely existed. But scattered references in the literature suggest that in the seventh century this new broad, boneless manner was not confined to Tunhuang. When Chang Yen-yün wrote of Li Su-hsün that "his brush style had an intense forcefulness . . . his clouds and vapours added a hazy uncertainty," and that sometimes in looking at his pictures one sensed dimly "all the mystery of cliffs and ranges," he must have been thinking of a style very different from the tightly-painted decorative manner with which Li Su-hsün is generally associated. Of the landscapes of Fan Ch'ang-shou, Chu Ching-hsüan wrote that "the natural forms would wind forward out of the distance while the animals strayed freely over quiet pastures"; while Wang T'o-tzu was good at "rendering the awesomeness of peaks and ranges." Such comments suggest a new breadth of treatment, and a new brush technique, in seventh-century painting that seem to be reflected in the beautiful landscape of Cave 323.

2. *The Linear Style*

A figure of Mañjuśrī (Tunhuang, Cave 276, plate 14) standing beside a tree with a little landscape behind is a beautiful example of the style of the early seventh century. The tree and landscape are drawn in red on a white ground, while a wash of red is brushed over some areas of the mountain contours. The foliage of the trees on the hillside is a soft green, and there is a touch of green on the foreground hills. The line is firm and slightly modulated, carving out the crags into odd shapes. The effect is elegant, restrained, and rather naive. The four tall landscape panels in Cave 209 are much more unusual and do not fit easily into any category. There is some attempt to suggest depth by overlapping planes, and there is a vista of distant mountains which recalls one of the painted *biwa* in the Shōsōin (plate 15). The overhanging *ch'üeh*-shaped hills are traditional (see *The Birth*, plate 132, and Grammar nos. 13, 14, 15), as are the rows of small trees along the contours of the hills. But the attempt to achieve largeness of design is new; so is the free handling of the brush in the foreground of both panels illustrated, in which water is made to rush along, or towards, the viewer with a new spontaneity. Here and in the wet wash painting of the trees the artist uses a loose, boneless style that is oddly at variance with the thin mean lines with which the landscape as a whole is defined, and that gives these panels, for all their awkwardness, a naive, exploratory charm. From the style of the figures these paintings belong in the seventh rather than the eighth century.

No securely dated seventh-century examples of the linear style had come to light until the discovery in 1973 of the wall-paintings in the tomb of the Emperor's cousin Li Shou (died 630) in San-yüan County. The decoration of the sloping entrance ramp includes processional and hunting scenes, of which a detail is illustrated in plate 17. The horsemen tearing about in all directions shooting from the saddle, and their unnaturally large size in relation to the landscape, give the picture an old-fashioned air. The barely modulated line is clear and rather delicate, the modelling of the rocks being suggested chiefly by the drawing, with only here and there a touch of shading, applied chiefly to set off a plane from the one in front of it, rather than to suggest texture: that was to be a development towards the painterly style of which no seventh-century examples have yet been published.

THE EIGHTH CENTURY

1. *The Boneless Style*

So elaborate is the Buddha group from Tunhuang Cave 74 in plate 16 that one does not see at first that it is enclosed in a huge space cell by encircling mountains that lead the eye backwards and upwards to the heavenly palace above. This is a splendid conception, the divine assembly seeming the more huge for the smallness of the mountains. These are done in a rather sophisticated version of a sixth-century style. The scalloped, wave-like peaks are painted in alternating bands of bright colours, a treatment that we found in the Western Wei Caves 257, 249, and 254 (*The Birth*, plates 102 and 106, and Grammar no. 28 upper right), and that is ultimately non-Chinese in origin.

In the upper left corner of our illustration an overhanging cliff can just be seen, built up of rectangular blocks of colour set in groups at angles to each other. This is a variant of the old "Indian crag" which in *The Birth* we traced from Mathurā and Sāñchi to China, and on via China and Korea into the Tamamushi Shrine at Hōryūji. Although Hsieh Chih-liu dates this cave to the first half of the eighth century, it preserves, so far as the landscape is concerned, conventions of sixth-century date. The scalloped, multicoloured mountain disappeared from Chinese art in the T'ang Dynasty. We do not know whether it was ever really fashionable except in the northwest; but it lingered on in Central Asia, a particularly striking example being in the wall-paintings from Cave-temple 19 at Bāzāklīk, of which a fragment is now in Berlin.⁸

The landscapes on the north and south walls of Cave 217 are among the most effective in all the Tunhuang caves. On each wall a central panel (larger on the north wall, smaller on the south) is marked off for a paradise composition, but plenty of room is left for the landscape below and on either side. Pelliot's photograph (plate 18) shows the greater part of the south wall, with in the upper right corner a small part of the section discussed below and illustrated in plate 19. The painting illustrates episodes from the Lotus Sūtra, including, in the centre, the story of the exhausted travellers for whom their guide conjures up, by magic, a walled city to spur them on their journey—a metaphor for the search for their spiritual goal.⁹ Here there is a masterly integration of space cells in areas carved and hollowed out with sweeping movements of the

brush. The treatment of space comes somewhere between the fairly diverse organisation of Cave 140 and the open, almost featureless terrain of Cave 323. In spite of the decorative effectiveness of the whole panel, however, the painter has not succeeded in solving all his technical difficulties, and it is fascinating to watch as he wrestles with them.

The mountains, which both define the upper horizon of a lower scene and provide foreground rocks for the one above it, are handled in a natural, easy way, but here and there the ambiguity is disconcerting. The mineral colours are laid on in heavy washes, seldom (and then chiefly in the distance) reinforced with drawn outlines. This suggests that the painter was defeated by a problem inherent in the boneless manner, namely that it is impossible to delineate distant objects without resorting to a more precise technique which inevitably makes them look sharper and clearer, and thus closer to the viewer, than the broad mountain masses of the foreground. Against this, however, is the fact that the very lack of definition of the "boneless" mountains presents an admirable contrast to the figures, houses, and buildings, and effectively focuses our attention upon them. The flowering trees, bamboo, and vines scattered over the panel are now faded and scarcely visible in our reproductions. They must once have lent added richness to the panel, and a decorative contrast to the broad sweep of the mountains. As aids in the creation of space cells they play a very secondary role.

The larger paradise panel on the north wall leaves correspondingly less room for the landscapes at the sides. Illustrated in plate 20, is the sketchy mountain vignette in the upper left corner above the scene where the young Prince Siddhārtha on horseback watches the military exercises of the Śākyas outside the walls of Kuśinagara.¹⁰ The desert landscape is rather unimaginatively suggested by broad horizontal sweeps of the brush in flat bands of colour, a technique that was to be preserved at Tunhuang as an increasingly empty formula for filling up space and indicating level ground (plates 93 and 94, for example). An overhanging *ch'ieh*-like cliff in the top left-hand corner is an interesting variant of the "Indian crag," here made less craggy by being executed in broad strokes of solid colour. Basil Gray puts this cave, chiefly on grounds of similar colouring, "not far distant in date" from Cave 220, which contains an inscription of A.D. 642; he considers that the art of Tunhuang shows almost no change before the Tibetan occupation of 777-778. But the handling of figures in Cave 217 is more plastic and full-bodied than in Cave 220, the line heavier and less restrained, and there is in the landscape a boldness and certainty not present in the seventh-century caves. I would agree with the Tunhuang Research Institute (and with Pelliot, Bachhofer, and Soper) in putting Cave 217 in the eighth century.

A small detail from the upper corner of the south wall of Cave 33 (plate 21) shows a charmingly naive vignette of distant mountains, grouped for the most part in sets of three. The nearer sets are solid in colour and rise out of the clouds. The further ones have scalloped edges and appear to be decorated in horizontal bands of colour—a curious survival into the eighth century of a Northern Wei convention (Cave 285, *The Birth*, plates 109, 110).

Two details are illustrated here of the upper part of the left wall of Cave 45 on either side of a standing figure of Avalokiteśvara, depicting the perils from which that deity protects the faithful.¹¹ On the left panel (plate 22) the landscape is crude, sketchy, broadly executed in washes with scarcely any detail. The right side (plate 23) on the other hand, becomes the more detailed and interesting as we move up from the tree freely painted in light washes, lower left. Halfway up a sharp outline begins to appear, and the contours, hitherto vaguely suggested, are edged with a variety of trees and plants. At the top of the panel the drawing of the trees and bamboo has become clearly articulated, with a suggestion of the painterly style in the handling of the tree trunks, and the figures are much better drawn. It is possible that a more accomplished artist began (or finished) the wall at this point, leaving the lower part and the left side to a less skillful assistant.

Paintings in Cave 172 (plates 24 and 25) illustrate a familiar Tunhuang theme: an expanse of flat terrain through which a river zigzags back, in one case to lose itself in the desert sand, in the other to disappear behind an overhanging cliff, leading the eye back to where a distant mountain rises into the sunset sky; in the foreground, seated on a rug with censer in hand, Queen Vaidehī meditates upon the huge orb of the setting sun, now blackened by oxidation. In both panels the landscape is boldly painted in washes of mineral colour: greens for the flat expanse, reds for the exposed earth of the cliff and river banks—a colour harmony familiar to anyone who knows the countryside of west China. The painter of the Queen Vaidehī scene has broken his washes to give modelling and texture to the cliff, making broad chopping strokes with the side of the brush, an anticipation of the later big axe-cut texture stroke (*ta fu-p'i ts'un*). Landscapes in the same style fill the corners of the Samantabhadra panel on the east wall (plate 26). Towering cliffs, painted very broadly, rear up on either side, with turbulent water filling the space between them. Beyond on the horizon is a wild landscape of rocky shores and distant mountains, while the sky is streaked with clouds, now darkened by time. The landscape represents a significant advance on the treatment of washes in Cave 217, for there is here a new flexibility in the movement of the brush and in the modulating colour tone within the brushstroke. Some of the strokes are ambiguous, and the texture does not define the form very clearly; but whether this is due to the painter's lack of skill or to the fact that this is an early effort in a new direction we cannot, of course, be sure. The importance of this detail is that for the first time the painter seems absorbed in the new possibilities, both descriptive and expressive, of the medium. There is a new freedom in the manipulation of tone, a new spontaneity of touch. The technical language has not yet become codified, but it is taking shape. With these landscapes, which Akiyama places in the third quarter of the eighth century, we are getting closer to a fully integrated painterly style.

We see the same freedom and sureness in the rendering of a tier of meditations in Cave 320 (plate 28). Behind the Queen stand two trees, a straight pine and a curving tree with large leaves, in that intimate relationship of "host" and "guest" which later became conventional. The cliff that rises to the left, with its *ch'ieh*-like overhang, is painted with firm strokes in red and green

with a hint of interior drawing. This panel and the meditation scene of Cave 172 (plate 24) may be from the same hand. A detail from Cave 320 (plate 27) depicts a seated Buddha with worshippers in a courtyard, a towering landscape behind, an Amitābha rising over the horizon, and another celestial being—perhaps a reflex of Amitābha—appearing before the Buddha on a cloud that extends in a long sinuous trail back through the valley towards the distant deity. To judge from the very poor reproduction, the style is similar to that of the previous detail, except that a thin line defines the distant crags. The similarity of the landscape to that on Biwa B in the Shōsōin, discussed below, suggests that this type of composition was popular in the T'ang period.

The device of a high cliff to one side is repeated in the detail from a side panel on the left wall of Cave 205 (plate 29), showing an animated encounter between a monk and another man. The landscape is painted with rather vague washes of broken colour that contrast oddly with the broad sweeps of solid mineral green marking off the contour in the upper left corner. Beyond, a tight little group of mountains painted in contrasting colours (in one case layered) is an archaic survival. The mixture of three different techniques does not add up to a very meaningful landscape. From the same cave is shown a rendering of the meditation scene (plate 30). Here bonelessness could be carried no further, though it is redeemed from sheer formlessness by the hard edges of the patches of colour which closely define the shape of the hills and river banks. The familiar lateral cliff and zigzag stream lead the eye back to an ambiguous horizon (is it the desert or the sea?) that is realised fully yet simply by a sweep of the brush, and a softening of tone. The very bareness of the landscape suggests rather movingly the lone solace of the Queen's communion with the setting sun.

In these details we can see the T'ang painter feeling towards a complete realisation of pictorial depth in a variety of ways: by the modelling of the terrain, by the introduction of a foreground cliff or a winding stream, by the tonal manipulation of the colour wash, or by a subtle and very Chinese relationship between a foreground figure and the distant object of his, or more often her, contemplation. Often the eye is borne on a sinuous S-curve that swings back through the centre to some focal point on the horizon. Generally this curve is undefined, although the winding stream may help the eye's movement without actually plotting its course—for the curve is an aerial and not a terrestrial one. Always in Chinese painting space is more real than the objects that occupy it. Occasionally the invisible line materialises—as, for example, in the "vapour trail" in Cave 320 (plate 27) which marks the path by which the Buddha Amitābha has swept down from the horizon to hover before Queen Vaidehī, following precisely the imaginary curve through space that is implied in the composition itself. More effective, because more natural, is the flight of birds on the Shōsōin biwa (plate 53). It is from such details that we must infer the discoveries of the great masters who in this period first learned how to convey the idea of metaphysical depth through pictorial depth, and who, by linking a foreground figure along an imaginary line with the horizon, united man and nature, the temporal and the eternal.

Cave 159, which can be dated from an inscription of 781, is decorated with some of the most interesting boneless landscape yet published from Tunhuang. The coverage, however, is tan-

talisingly inadequate. The Samantabhadra panel on the left of the outer wall of the west niche (plate 31) is in the mature T'ang manner, still very Chinese and as yet untouched by the Tibetan occupation. The landscape in the background is cunningly disposed to fill the space around the canopy, while the artist has achieved a simple and very effective recession to the distant mountain tops rising above the clouds by means of the lines of trees that curve back across the plain. On either side the tree-clad hills that frame the scene are painted in broken washes of mineral colour. The subtle and harmonious movement of the design from the figures into the landscape well conveys the idea, which seems peculiarly Chinese, that the paradise is not just a group of deities and their attendants, or even a flower-bedecked palace, but an actual place. Indian and Central Asian renderings of the paradise theme stress the palaces and gardens described in the *Sukhāvātī Vyūha*. The Chinese artist not only suggests the extent of the heavenly realm, but turns to the landscape itself as an aid to the expression of a religious idea. The corresponding landscape behind the Mañjuśrī group (plate 32) appears to be by a less skillful artist, one less confident in the handling of colour washes, which he outlines with a thin, characterless line. His poorly-drawn trees seem to be rather feeble imitations of those in the neighbouring panel.

We have a rather clearer idea of the landscapes in the angle of the wall behind the standing bodhisattva and monk (plate 33).¹² Set in tall, narrow screen panels, they are executed in a free and open style which might be described as boneless/painterly. The hills are painted in washes of mineral green with a darker outline, while here and there, as in the Chang Huai tomb panel (plate 47) and Biwa A in the Shōsōin (plate 50), the long, gentle contour is broken by smaller outcrops of rock rendered in a thoroughly painterly style.

2. The Linear Style

Few examples of the linear style survive from the eighth century, but there is no reason to think that it suddenly went out of fashion. It was perhaps what Chu Ching-hsian had in mind when he described Li Chao-tao's work as "very detailed and clever," but no reliable copies of that artist's work survive.

Two of the most important eighth-century examples so far published—important partly because they are securely dated and the name of the artist is known—are undoubtedly the landscapes behind the palace gateway and the assembly of warriors and horsemen painted on either side of the sloping entrance passageway of the tomb of Prince I-te, buried in Ch'ien-hsien, northwest of Sian, in 706. I-te, second son of Chung-tsung, was denounced—together with his sister, the Princess Yung-t'ai, and her husband Wu Yen-chi—to the notorious Chang brothers, favourites of the Empress Wu, and was either ordered to commit suicide or flogged to death in October 701.¹³ An inscription on the wall of the shaft gives the name of the artist, Yang Kung-kuei; a second inscription reads *Yang Kung-kuei yüan te ch'ang kung ch'i*, which might be translated "Yang Kung-kuei sincerely and forever offers in respect." Nothing is known about Yang, who probably belonged to the imperial ateliers. He was evidently not a well-known artist,

but his style presumably reflects an orthodox courtly manner of landscape painting at the turn of the eighth century, possibly that of Li Ssu-hsün.

The wedge-shaped painting on the east (righthand) wall of the passage begins on the right with a huge dragon amid clouds, striding before the triple gate-tower of the palace. Within the wall are ranged troops of the Guard, mounted and on foot, and civil officials, with three empty carriages fitted with canopies and streamers. A similar scene decorates the left wall of the passage. Behind these assemblies a mountainous landscape rises almost to the top of the panel, but some of the plaster has fallen away, and there is nothing to show whether there was a horizon or not. The lower slopes are gentle (plate 34), but as we go higher the crags pile up on one another in some confusion, flat-topped and wedge-shaped rocks thrusting against each other, folding in upon one another, their crystalline facets turned this way and that. For all its apparent incoherence, however, the landscape has a remarkable solidity and feeling for volume, achieved largely through the drawing and, to a much lesser extent, by means of a somewhat arbitrary, but effective, use of shading on certain chosen facets of the rocks—often the uppermost face. Here and there (plate 35) the artist uses parallel lines along the edges of his rocks to create a slab-like effect similar to that employed by one of the artists of the *Ingakyō* scrolls (plate 73).

The line is firm, strongly articulated, like thick bent wire, hardly modulated at all though the exposed ends of lines trail away to a "mouse-tail." The colours consist chiefly of a warm reddish-brown or greenish-brown shading to black and lightening to yellow ochre, while the further edge of some of the contours is enriched with malachite green, as in the rocks below the bodhisattvas in the Hōryūji Kondō, discussed below (plate 36). Groups of trees, firmly and clearly drawn, and correct in scale, stand here and there among the rocks in the middle distance. In several respects (plate 37) the technique is in direct line of descent from the early T'ang detail from Cave 276 at Tunhuang illustrated in plate 14.

The wall-paintings in the Kondō of Hōryūji, although their date is not firmly established, are thought to have been executed in the decade before or after 710, and so are roughly contemporary with the 1-te tomb paintings. Below several of the Kondō figures and groups, traces of very simple landscapes could still be made out before 1949, the most readily decipherable being that below the standing Avalokiteśvara of Panel 12 (plate 38). Formal, artificial, archaic, it consists chiefly of a large flat-topped overhanging rock and attendant slab-like rocks. The forms are a good deal simpler, more severe, than in the 1-te fresco, the firm line less emphatic and jerky in its rhythm; but it too is modulated, and as in the tomb paintings the malachite green—or what is left of it—seems to be confined to the upper edge of the flat areas.

A much-published detail from the south wall of Cave 103 at Tunhuang (plate 39) is in a more open and relaxed version of the linear style, and the mineral colours, chiefly blues and greens on a light ground, are more cheerful than the sombre reds and browns of the 1-te fresco. The panel illustrates incidents in the journey of a monk returning from India, almost certainly Hsüan-tsang, who had been presented with an elephant by the King of Kuśinagara.¹⁴ The space cells are skillfully linked into a continuous landscape very similar to that of Cave 217, except that

the sweeping boneless brushstrokes of the latter are here replaced by thin drawn lines. These are definitive rather than expressive, although there is some variation in thickness; we find the mouse-tail line employed and even, here and there, a suggestion of the nail-head. Because these lines define the edges of the contours so clearly, the sense of distance is partly lost, as it is in a Dürer engraving, for the distant mountains are as sharply drawn as those in the foreground. The eye has more points on which to rest than in Cave 217, and the mountains and vegetation compete with the figures for the viewer's attention. There is the same ambiguity: the distant mountains of one scene are the foreground rocks of the scene above it. In spite of the frontal unity of the whole composition, there is a tendency for mountain ranges to lead back diagonally leftwards into the distance. This convention can be found in the earliest landscapes at Tunhuang, notably the Rūrū Jātaka of Cave 285.

Two more paintings must be taken into consideration in any discussion of the T'ang linear style, which they seem to preserve with varying degrees of faithfulness, whatever their actual date of execution.

Travelling in Springtime, Yu-ch'un t'u (plates 40–42) is a short handscroll in the Palace Museum, Peking, attributed in an inscription in the handwriting of Sung Hui-tsung to Chan Tzu-ch'ien.¹⁵ A low, hilly promontory in the right foreground leads the eye back to a triple group of mountains in the heart of which a torrent runs forward under a bridge into the lake. Beyond to the left the hills stretch back to the horizon. The hilly foreshore in the lower left corner completes the composition, which is enlivened by travellers on horseback, crossing the water by ferry or merely waiting for it to arrive. The landscape is drawn on silk in a fine line, tinted with mineral blue and green. A farmhouse nestling in the hills is drawn in ink, but another building (possibly a temple) and the timbers of the bridge are picked out in warm red. The clouds are painted in opaque white, while the figures are white too—although this may simply be the white underpaint, exposed by the rubbing off of the colours laid on top of it. The whole effect is warm, cheerful, and redolent of the atmosphere of spring. The sources of this type of composition reach back at least to the fifth century. In time it became as conventional as the European classical landscape with its “brown tree” in the foreground.

If we isolate the complex of hills in the upper right, we find that it consists essentially of the tripartite mountain of ancient lineage, reminiscent of the composition Ku K'ai-chih described in his essay “On Painting the Cloud Terrace Mountain.”¹⁶ (The painting called *Ming-huang's Journey to Shu*, described below, is based on the same idea.) The scale is still false: the distant figures are too big, the buildings too small. Moreover, it is not clear what all the travellers are doing. Here we have a ferry with gentlemen waiting for it on the near shore; but where has it come from? And where are the two riders in the right foreground going? These questions might seem idle were it not that in a Chinese landscape everything has its place, and this kind of inconsistency or obscurity is often an indication of the hand of a copyist or *pasticheur*.

The superimposed planes of the main mountain groups are very like those in Cave 103 and have the same flatness, accentuated by the fact that in archaic fashion all the trees spring from the

contour lines. By contrast, the broad path leading back from the immediate foreground to the bridge lends convincing depth. We are reminded of the early seventh-century artist Fan Ch'ang-shou, in whose landscapes "the natural forms would wind forward out of the distance." The trees diminish hardly at all in size as we go back into the picture, till at an arbitrarily chosen point they suddenly become little bushes on the edges of the hills: we have already encountered this early inability to carry through a convincing diminution in scale in several of the Tunhuang landscapes.

The brush line is slightly more modulated than in Cave 103: there is a more perceptible knot at the head of it, and a slight thickening at the joints where the brush has paused for a fraction of a second before changing direction. This gives an articulation to the drawing of the rocks that is more sensitive and lively than in *Ming-huang's Journey to Shu*.

In general, *Travelling in Springtime* is handled in a natural, charming and rather naive way, with none of the brilliant fantasy and distortion of *Ming-huang's Journey*. How reliable it is as an example of the style of the early T'ang Dynasty it is impossible to say, as there is no original T'ang landscape scroll with which to compare it: all one can safely do is to discuss the composition, conventions, and technique in a general way. As to the actual date, several things would suggest that if not an authentic seventh-century painting, it is at least a good copy of one. It shows none of the confident maturity that we would expect of eighth-century work, but is redolent with the delicate, somewhat artificial charm that one associates with the sixth century, Sui and early T'ang. The picture contains many archaic features and, unlike the work next described, no obvious anachronism, so it must be given a prominent place in any study of early T'ang landscape painting.¹⁷

The much better known scroll entitled *Ming-huang's Journey to Shu* (plate 43) presents the same problem as the "Chan Tzu-ch'ien" though in more acute form. Careful examination suggests that while a Sung date for it may be possible—Ch'ien-lung in his inscription says it is a Northern Sung copy of a T'ang work—it is likely to be even more recent, and is consequently of questionable value as an example of T'ang landscape style.¹⁸ Both composition and technique point to a late date. The "squeezed-up" look of the picture, for example, the emphasis on verticals, the crowding of detail, all suggest that it may be a shortened version of a much longer handscroll which would have conveyed more naturally the idea of a leisurely excursion among the hills; or that it may be a much-reduced version of a composition which might have begun as a wall- or screen-painting. Such truncating of compositions by successive copyists was not uncommon. There is another even more exaggeratedly vertical, squeezed-up, version of this composition in the Palace Museum in Taiwan, traditionally attributed to Li Chao-tao but probably a Ming work; the "Yen Li-pen" *Tribute Bearers* is, from its crowding, very probably a shortened version of a long handscroll; and some versions of the Chou Fang *Tuning the Lute and Drinking Tea* composition are shorter and more compressed than others.

The artist has made use of many archaic conventions: the tripartite division of the mountains; the organisation in space cells; the exaggerated overhanging *ch'ieh*; the broken multi-

faceted rocks; the lack of continuous depth and abrupt transition from foreground trees to shrub-like growths on the distant hills; the streams winding forward to the bottom of the picture; the horsemen "coming round the mountain." But he has combined them in a highly artificial and sophisticated way, for which there seems nothing remotely comparable in surviving T'ang painting. Moreover the copyist's hand betrays itself in such details as the short, fine horizontal lines which fill the flat facets of the vertical rocks and cliffs. There is no evidence for such a technique in authentic T'ang painting and it suggests that the painter, wanting to give texture to his mountains but being well aware that in the T'ang period no vocabulary of texture strokes (*ts'ün-fa*) existed, was reduced to filling up the space with this rather feeble apology for *ts'ün-fa*. The same fine, short horizontal strokes do duty also for grasses on the flat tops of the crags. There are other inconspicuous shortcuts such as a group of dark trees, very sketchily painted, that are crammed into a dark cleft under the overhanging *ch'üeh* on the right of the picture; while the two horsemen who ride down apparently out of the sky in the upper right corner lend an air of unreality to the scene.

That this jewel-like picture is based on a T'ang original and that it preserves many T'ang conventions is probable. But these anomalies, combined with the striking freshness of the colour and good condition of the scroll—none of the cracks seem very old—all suggest the hand of a brilliant copyist, adaptor, or *pasticheur*, working perhaps as recently as the fifteenth century.

3. The Painterly Style

The painterly style, which I described as a fully integrated combination of articulated line and wash (either ink or colour or both) appears to have come to fruition in the eighth century. It seems to have existed in a more rudimentary form in the seventh century, but no mature and reliably dated examples of that period have as yet been published.

The almost total absence of the developed painterly style in the wall-paintings at Tunhuang, and its frequency among the Tunhuang banner-paintings, is not hard to explain. For it was not, in essence, a decorator's style. The emphasis upon the broken, expressive ink line as a means of defining structure reduces colour to a subordinate role. Moreover, the landscapes in the Tunhuang wall-paintings were often no more than a setting for the figures, and a broad treatment in simple colours provided an effective contrast to the precisely-detailed figures of deities and donors, setting them off rather than competing for attention. The Tunhuang wall-painters who chose to execute their landscapes in a boneless, or near-boneless, manner clearly knew what they were about. In the banners, on the other hand, which were to be seen close up, a more integrated technique was entirely appropriate. But we should not infer from this that the same stylistic division between boneless wall-paintings and painterly scroll-painting necessarily obtained in metropolitan China. At Ch'ang-an, the influences on wall-painting of great masters of ink line and broken ink wash such as Wu Tao-tzu and Chang Tsao must have been considerable.

The published tomb paintings are extremely valuable, for they are securely dated, but as yet they are lamentably few in number. The material in the Shōsōin belongs to the first half of the

eighth century, and in one or two cases possibly a little earlier. Some of it might be Chinese seventh-century work, or Japanese or Korean work done in an old-fashioned style, the obvious example being *Biwa A* (plate 50). It may be safely assumed that, leaving the question of later restoration aside, none of the Shōsōin pieces discussed in this book are later in date than the 750's, when the repository was dedicated.

The dating of the Tunhuang banners is more problematical. A widely held theory is that the vast hoard of scrolls and documents discovered by Oldenburg, Stein, and Pelliot was bricked up in the concealed storehouse in about the year 1000, in the face of the Hsi-hsia invasion. But this is doubtful, for by that time the Hsi-hsia were almost certainly Buddhist and there would be no need to hide the scrolls. Stein suggested that the hoard was a "deposit of sacred waste," worn-out copies of scriptures too sacred to be thrown away or destroyed; and this seems the most probable explanation.¹⁹ It is likely that many of the banners had long been in existence, either in the Tunhuang temples or in private houses in the neighbourhood, before they were stowed away. In Tibet, and in adjacent Lamaist countries such as Sikkim and Bhutan, private houses have chapels hung with banners (*tankha*) which were generally executed in the temple studio or by an itinerant artist, on the advice of a lama, to ward off calamity or as a thank-offering for the birth of a son, recovery from illness, and so on. Such scrolls when old and worn-out could not be thrown away, and it is possible that those found at Tunhuang were brought there over a period of many years. A careful recording of the contents of the storeroom as they were unfiled from the top might possibly have yielded a roughly stratified sequence, and hence a clue to this.

In a piece that he wrote for an exhibition of Chinese and Japanese paintings at the British Museum in 1962, Basil Gray stated that "the Stein paintings represent the products of the temple-painters in the century or so after the restoration of Chinese rule"—after, that is, the expulsion of the Tibetans in 848. There is no justification for this statement. Lionel Giles, in his study of the Stein manuscripts in the British Museum, does indeed remark that "during a remarkable gap of forty-five years in the first half of the ninth century, when the Tibetans were dominant in the Tunhuang region, *not a single dated text occurs*."²⁰ But among the wealth of dated documents of all kinds discovered at Tunhuang, the earliest of which is a colophon of A.D. 406, are a number of Buddhist, Taoist, and other texts of the seventh and eighth centuries. There is no reason why some of the banners could not have been painted before the Tibetan occupation began in 776. The only guides here are subject matter and style. I have not found good stylistic reasons for dating any of those with interesting landscape details in the seventh century; but several can, by comparison with more securely dated material elsewhere, be safely put in the eighth, and one, from its inscription, was executed during the occupation of 776–848.

Although all the scroll-paintings by known eighth-century masters are lost, enough survives to suggest a striking and important fact: that brushwork had by now attained a degree of confident richness and sophistication that made it possible for the artist, through the modulated line, broken ink and wash, and contrasts of light and dark—a combination of qualities lacking in pre-T'ang work—to express a feeling for form and texture that is solid, definite, and unam-

biguous. There is in fact in several of the examples illustrated here (frontispiece, plates 75 and 77, for instance) a directness of expression that was later lost when a formal vocabulary of texture strokes, *ts'un-fu*, developed, and the painter's language became not only more conventional but also more deeply coloured by philosophy. This directness, of course, may have been much less apparent in the lost works of the masters; but it seems to accord with the spirit of the high T'ang era, which was in general more positive, less speculative, than that of the Six Dynasties and Sung.

The recent opening of the group of early eighth-century princely tombs northwest of Sian has revealed an interesting early stage in the evolution of the painterly style. The landscapes (plates 46-49) that decorate the entrance shaft of the tomb of Li Hsien, Prince Chang Huai (died 684), in Ch'ien-hsien, although of exactly the same date as those in the I-te tomb (706), are in quite a different style.²¹ Here instead of a complex "linear" piling up of crags, the huntsmen gallop across a wide open expanse of country, and the landscape is hardly more than suggested by a line of pine trees, or by gentle sloping hills that here and there have outcrops of rock.

The drawing is still linear, but the line moves a little more freely than in I-te landscapes. The painter here and there gives a sudden twist to his brush, producing a springy, calligraphic quality not present in the much stiffer I-te tomb drawing. The wash within the line is more broken, more sensitively handled, more expressive of the form of the rock, and more harmoniously integrated with the line. The contours of the hills are emphasised by a more subtly graded wash than the mineral-blue edge to the slopes in the I-te landscapes. The Chang Huai landscapes seem to be by another hand, and to represent an early breakthrough into the painterly style. However, if the Ingakyō scrolls (plates 68 to 74) are accurate eighth-century copies of seventh-century works, which the style of the figures certainly seems to suggest, then the Chang Huai rocks may represent a technique that had already developed in seventh-century scroll-painting.

THE BIWA IN THE SHŌSŌIN

A group of biwa in the South Depository of the Shōsōin bear, on their plectrum-guards, some of the most interesting surviving landscapes of the eighth century. Four of these have the shape and proportion of hanging scrolls in miniature. It would be tempting to infer from this that the landscape hanging scroll was already in existence at this time. It may have been, but there is no firm evidence that it was. The shape could as easily have been taken from a screen-panel or wall-painting, or merely chosen because it gave the best protection for the instrument from the slashing strokes of the plectrum across the strings.

The colours of the paintings on all the plectrum-guards discussed here have suffered considerable changes due chiefly to age and oxidation. The leather panels are all coated with red lead (Plumbic oxide Pb_3O_4), which has remained relatively stable;²² over this a white clay or white lead pigment was sometimes laid as a ground, although elsewhere the ground is red, or red and white, as on Biwa E (plate 54). The most widely used green colour is malachite, in two shades, light and dark, which has oxidised black, creating serious colour distortions. When

finished, the paintings were coated with a varnish of vegetable oil which has darkened with age to a yellowish-brown, softening the colours, and dulling the lead-white used in the modelling of some of the rocks and in the drawing of clouds and waves. The oil coating has also cracked badly, especially on *Biwa B* and *D* (plates 51 and 54), so that the composition is not entirely decipherable, even from infra-red or ultra-violet photographs.

Biwa A

On the left a crag rises up behind the flat platform on which sit the feasting and music-making party, facing a turbulent stream, while the scene is enlivened with hunters pursuing their quarry and servants bringing in the spoils of the chase. In contrast to the liveliness of the figures and animals, the landscape has an archaic stiffness, most notably in the hillocks behind and below the seated figures, painted in hard-edge stripes of reddish-brown and—originally—malachite green. These call to mind the striped wave-like hills in the hunting scene from the Tomb of the Dancers at Tung-k'ou, just north of the Yalu River in northeast China (formerly Manchuria), painted under the Korean Koguryō Kingdom in the fifth or sixth century.²³

The use of this old technique is puzzling. It cannot have been chosen because the painter did not have a more modern technique at his command, for the foreground rocks on the left, and to some degree the upper crag, are painted in fine, slightly modulated ink lines within which is shading with light ink washes, a denser and more solid combination of ink and colour (malachite) wash, and here and there in the lighter areas light touches laid on with the side of the brush; moreover, as in the linear examples from Tunhuang (Cave 103), the colour tends to shrink away from the contours, leaving the lines to speak for themselves. All these factors suggest an early stage in the development of the painterly style. The warm red background is typical of the earlier Northern Wei style as exemplified, for example, by the paintings in Cave 285 at Tunhuang, and the painted screen from the tomb of Ssu-ma Chin-lung (died 484) at Ta-t'ung.²⁴ Space is handled rather crudely in flat areas of colour with little attempt to suggest recession by the drawing or by any tonal or textural modulation of the colour, while there is some doubt as to how the enclosure or ledge on which the feasting musicians sit relates to what happens above and below it.

This combination of archaic clumsiness with tentative efforts towards a painterly style suggests that the painting was done in the seventh century or very early in the eighth. Whether or not it was executed in Japan it is impossible to say. Indeed, there is no firm evidence to show where any of the Shōsōin *biwa* were made.²⁵

Biwa B

Two gentlemen sit on a rock spur in the foreground, the sides of which have a suggestion of lotus petals, though whether this was intended to carry Buddhist associations it is impossible to say (plate 51). One gentleman recites poetry, the other, brush and paper in hand, looks over his shoulder as if to match his friend's chanting with the view before him. Across the river, originally painted light malachite green with waves in white, the crags pile up to distant tree-clad peaks,

cleft to right and left by deep ravines through which waterfalls tumble. In the sky, white clouds curl against a red background. The surface is much damaged by the action of the plectrum and the paint is darkened and cracked, particularly in the centre, where all that can be made out from infra-red photographs is a suggestion of foliage, and the red autumn tints. The colour is applied much more thickly than on *Biwa C* and the brushwork is correspondingly less lively and expressive; but enough survives to suggest a treatment more advanced than that of *Biwa A*.

The trees on all but the nearest rock by the waterfall on the left are indicated in a perfunctory way, there being only two simple types like cotton balls on little twisted sticks. One is reminded of Chang Yen-yüan's remark about Wei Chien that he "never got away from antique clumsiness"; and about Wang Wei: "Where the moors and plains are wooded, the distant trees err in the direction of primitive clumsiness, and yet if he had striven for detailed refinement, he would only have missed reality all the more." Clearly, a feature of some early eighth-century painters was their inability still to paint distant trees convincingly, though it is hard to believe that Wang Wei's technique would have been as clumsy as this. However, if in some respects the handling is a little backward-looking, the theme and composition look forward, for this was to become a stock type of gentleman's painting from the Sung Dynasty onwards. It is not impossible that the composition was copied from a painting by a major eighth-century master.

Biwa C

This (plates 52 and 53) is probably the best and most fully-realised T'ang landscape yet published. In the foreground a white elephant stands in a lively attitude as though he had just stopped in mid-journey, turning his head to look at the little Central Asian orchestra perched on a rug on his back: a bearded drummer, a singing dancer, and two young flautists, boy and girl. Behind rise steep hills on either side framing a view to the western horizon. The crags on the left form a precipice like those in a number of Tunhuang compositions, clearly a popular T'ang convention. The crags on the right stop shorter and are crowned with flowering trees. Behind them, beyond the lake, another tree-clad outcrop plunges down to the water, its foot ringed with a sandy beach where a long line of ducks, winging their way out of the sunset, is just alighting. *Ch'ieh*-shaped projections left and right arch towards each other in the middle distance, pulling the design together. Beyond a further range of lower hills, distant mountain peaks capped with white clouds thrust their tops through the mist that lies in a broad flat band across the horizon. Behind red clouds the setting sun is sending its last rays streaking up into the sky.

The clamorous orchestra on its ungainly mount seems a noisy intrusion into a scene of which the mood is otherwise mellow, tranquil, and poetic, recalling the lines of Wang Wei's quatrain "Magnolia Park," from the Wang-ch'uan series:

Autumn hills taking the last of the light
Birds flying, mate following mate
Brilliant greens here and there distinct
Evening mists have no resting place.²⁶

The artist's handling of space is very accomplished. The viewer's eye is carried back along an S-curve to the horizon, the same curve that runs through the design of *Biwa D* (plate 54) and several of the Tunhuang landscapes reproduced in this book (plates 24 and 27, for example). The continuous or shifting perspective that one normally associates with later painting is here managed with great skill: the rocks in the foreground would be only a few feet below the viewer standing on the spot, but as we move up the picture the viewpoint rapidly changes, till at the top we are looking over the distant hills to the horizon.

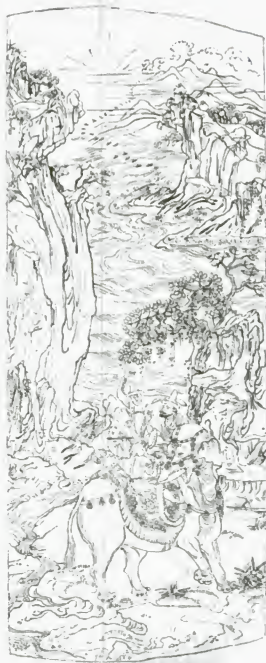
The background of this beautiful landscape is red lead overlaid with white. The drawing was done in ink to which shading was added, not so much to indicate a source of light as to enhance the modelling and throw certain areas into relief. Colours include vermilion and reddish-violet for the autumn foliage, brown for tree-trunks, malachite for the nearby tufts of grass and the verdure on the hilltops, dark blue for distant mountains, light brown for shading the ground; the water was painted blue over white underpaint, the waves in ink and white paint. Against the red glow of the sunset the rays of the setting sun are lightly drawn in ink. The ink washes, here sweeping, there broken, are varied and accented with short strokes and dots which, while they give visual interest to the terrain and enhance the modelling, say very little about its texture. Are the vertical faces rock, or earth, or both? The painter does not tell us. In fact, it does not seem to have mattered to him. What seems chiefly to have concerned him is that they are exciting as plastic, sculptural shapes, and pictorially effective. On the other hand, he takes great trouble to suggest the sandy beach with tiny dots of red, like a *pointilliste*.

The trees and plants are as skilfully rendered as in any surviving painting of the period, varying in scale from the foreground reeds and grasses through the broad-leaved and flowering trees of the middle distance, back to the distant pines, although those on the *ch'ieh*-shaped rock on the right retain a little of the archaic flavour. The artist also makes decorative use of the hanging vines which are a common convention in T'ang landscape painting (see, for example, plates 29 and 39).

The charm and artificiality of this landscape suggest that it is not based on nature, but is imaginary, or perhaps inspired by a poem. At the same time, and paradoxically, the fact that the vocabulary of texture strokes, *ts'un-fa*, has not yet become codified gives to the artist's expression of form a directness that will be lost when, from the tenth century onwards, a more conventionalised and abstract language of the brush develops.

Biwa D

This badly darkened painting (plate 54) shows, against a red background, an eagle diving on a pair of ducks who rise in panic from a lake stretching back between rocky promontories to the horizon, above which distant mountains thrust their peaks through the swirling clouds. In spite of the painting's condition, the brush technique seems, from reproductions, to be more advanced than that of *Biwa A* and *B*, and closer to *C*. While the handling of the distant promontories on either side with their silhouetted pine trees in malachite green is rather old-fashioned, the main rocky crags in the left foreground and right centre, done in dark green, light brown, and ink,



Biwa C and D. Line drawings of landscape on plectrum-guard.

appear to be rendered in broken washes, and the line is lively and free. The same applies to the distant mountaintops. They are drawn in ink, then dusted with gold powder; over this is a wash of malachite for the modelling, through which the gold shows through. Japanese authorities who describe the *biwa* in great detail state that this is a T'ang technique, although they give no T'ang examples. It later became popular in Japanese screen painting, but its origins seem by no means clear. The path of the eagle along an imaginary sinuous curve down the picture gives a remarkable sense of sweeping movement through space. This picture too may be a miniature version of a composition by a T'ang master.

OTHER LANDSCAPES IN THE SHŌSŌIN

One of the best examples of the painterly technique in the Shōsōin is the landscape that adorns the top of a persimmon-wood box stained a warm brown with sapan juice (plate 56). The landscape, ingeniously arranged to be seen from all four directions, is painted in gold and silver without the addition for shading of any darker pigment, the dark areas being simply the stained background. There are two types of trees, pine and deciduous, and clouds curl up like smoke out of the valleys, echoing the shape of the trees. From lower rhythmic, wave-like hills the mountains pile up into rocky crags, painted with sweeping or broken strokes according to the texture desired. The artist has handled the painterly manner with confident skill, and the landscape is both decorative and intensely alive. The gold and silver paint on a warm ground, which was later widely used in Japanese screen painting, here appears for the first time. During the early Sung period Korean fans painted in silver were very popular in China,²⁷ but just where the technique originated is not known. We see the same technique in close-up, as it were, in the fragment of a landscape painting with bamboo, birds, and flowers that covered a scroll of the Brāhmarāja Sūtra (plate 55).

A group of sixteen round trays in the Shōsōin is decorated with floral patterns or with landscape vignettes executed on a white ground in yellow ochre, gamboge, and two other yellows that have not been identified. Two trays have scholars beneath trees, strolling or playing the lute; another, an empty hermitage beneath a pine tree beside the water with deer and crane (presumably a "long life" or birthday picture); others have tigers or deer bounding through a landscape, or birds, among which the auspicious phoenix is prominent. The designs fill the circular shape with charm and skill. The calligraphic line twists and turns with lively freedom. There is little indication of texture within the contour, and scarcely any shading, but the free, expressive use of the broken, modulated line certainly puts the paintings on these trays in the painterly class. Several of them are discussed further in the section on trees and plants. Meantime, illustrated here (plate 57) is a very freely painted landscape that decorates the inside of a round mirror case. The style is similar to that of the landscape on the sapan-wood box, but more sketchily done.

The miniature paintings illustrated in plate 58 were executed on the *underside* of tortoise-shell plaques decorating the sides of a zither of hinoki wood in the Shōsōin, and hence were invisible

until they were recently removed. These charming little scenes include: (1) hares bounding through a landscape of mountains and pine trees; (2) parakeets and dragonflies with a flowering peony; (3) a tiger pursuing a hare amid pine-clad mountains; (4) and (5) hares at peace in a landscape similar to 3; and (6) birds and flowers. The painting is done in ink on a yellowish ground, and the predominating colours are the green of leaves and pine-needles, and a warm reddish-brown with patches of red here and there. The drawing of both mountains and trees is lively, the handling of the twisted trunks of the pine trees being particularly free and painterly.

The maps of Tōdai-ji and its estates, among the oldest in the world,²⁸ have been exhaustively studied. We are only concerned with the way in which the landscape is handled. Three distinct hands can be seen in the three examples illustrated here. The map of Tōdai-ji itself and the hills to the north, east, and south (plate 59) is dated equivalent to 756. It is the most accomplished of the three. A temple complex is shown correctly in plan, but individual major buildings (except for the pagodas, which would take up too much room) are shown by their main south elevation. Rivers are shown in plan but mountains can only be rendered, like the large temple buildings, by a side view. Which view is chosen is determined by a series of focal viewpoints. For example, the hills surrounding Tōdai-ji are drawn as they would look to someone gazing round from the roof of the Daibutsu-den; the same is true of the wooded hills that encircle Shinyakushi-ji to the south, while the trees in the deer park just outside the main gate of Tōdai-ji are drawn as they would appear to someone walking along the north-south road on the extreme left of the detail (plate 60). The hills are drawn in long, undulating lines, and a delicately graded wash is added to emphasise the contours. The artist distinguishes clearly between the prettily drawn trees in the park and the more sketchy distant trees on the edges of the hills.

A somewhat cruder and heavier brush defines the hills that encircle the valley in the map of Minase, in Settsu Province, of the same date (plate 61). The map of Michimori Village in Echizen Province, dated ten years later (plate 62), is drawn in a thinner, more linear style. The artist is not quite certain whether he is making a map or a picture: he cannot, for example, resist adding here and there a garden rock and grasses, although they are grossly out of scale. The trees were first brushed in with a light wash, over which short, curved strokes suggest very simply the shape and texture of the foliage.

A similar lightness of technique is shown in the landscape sketches on hemp cloth (plates 63, 64, 65), which, it has been suggested, might have been intended as a guide for embroidery. Though they are very little help as regards brush technique, they illustrate aspects of eighth- or possibly seventh-century landscape style not revealed by any other early paintings in quite the same way—notably, the sense of airy space. The artist has a small repertoire of standard trees, three of which are grouped together in our details. His repertoire of waterfalls is even smaller: virtually the same one appears twice on one panel, a third time on the other. The rocks that thrust up from the slopes here and there are a survival of a convention that goes back to Six Dynasties painting (*The Birth*, Grammar nos. 8, 17; Maichishan, Cave 127) and is still used, in a much more natural way, in the wall-paintings in the Chang Huai tomb (plates 47 and 48). The scene is further enlivened with sketchily drawn cottages, a gateway, and a post possibly indicating a ferry, with

horseman, fishermen, birds flying and on the water, and horses rolling in a field.

There is nothing quite like these panels in early Chinese art. They lack the calligraphic vigour and solidity of T'ang painting. However, they have a delicate, even slightly fussy, charm which I am inclined to consider, on the basis of the character of later Korean decorative art, inlaid celadon, and painting, as a Korean quality. The draftsman may have been a Korean immigrant.

In Chapter VI the fancy rock was discussed as a source of pleasure in the early Chinese garden and on the scholar's desk. Fancy rocks must have been included in paintings of palace and fairy gardens as far back as the Chin Dynasty, but the earliest references I can find to the actual painting of such rocks occur in the first half of the eighth century, when Wu Tao-tzu included in some of his temple paintings "strange rocks that looked as if one might touch them," and his scholarly contemporary Lu Hung was noted for his "rocks with holes in them." No T'ang work survives that could be called a pure "fancy rocks painting," but they form a conspicuous feature in a number of pictures of the eighth century, generally standing beneath figures, their function being to denote that "this is a garden."

The best known examples are the rocks that stand at the feet of the ladies under trees on the six-panel screen in the Shōsōin. Some of them, no doubt intentionally, suggest dragons and tigers (plate 66). They are done with a rather dry brush in a pure painterly style in monochrome ink. The contour lines are lively, sensitive, calligraphic; while the interior shading, though arbitrary and a little sketchy, subtly emphasises the plastic form of each rock with a variety of brushwork from the long stroke in light ink for more general shading to the short, curved or stubby stroke, dash, or dot to provide the darker accent (plate 67). However, very little of what we see of these rocks today is original. They were largely repainted, in some cases several times, the latest repainting being in the Edo period, and we cannot know how much of the original brushwork is still visible.

The rocks on Biwa E (R17), a delightful picture of elderly gentlemen playing chess in a grove of bamboo and pine, are rather similar in shape to those on the screen, but the effect is more decorative. Not only is the scene painted over a red and white lotus flower that completely fills the circle, but the trees and rocks are touched in with thick malachite green paint over white. As in other instances where opaque colour is used, it keeps well within the main lines of the drawing, leaving them clearly visible; but in the centre of each rock it overlies and obscures the brushstrokes.

THE INGAKYŌ SCROLLS

One of the oldest documents in T'ang landscape style is the *Kuo-ch'i hsien-tsai yin-kuo ching*, Sūtra on Past and Present Cause and Effect (Japanese: *Kako Genzai Ingakyō*), a life of the historical Buddha that was translated into Chinese by the monk Gunabhadra in the 435-443 era and remained popular so long as Buddhism flourished in China.

There are a number of versions and fragments of the Ingakyō scrolls in different collections, chiefly in Japan.²⁹ Some appear to be of the seventh or eighth century, or very close copies of

works of that period; others are as late as the Kamakura era. Early records show that the temple Offices for Copying Scriptures, Zōji-shi, and the Office of Painting, E-dokoro, at Nara turned out illustrated sūtras in great numbers. It is generally agreed among Japanese scholars that scrolls of the Ingakyō owned by the Tōkyō University of Art, the Jōbon-rendai-ji, the Hōon-in of Daigō-ji (dated 735), the Hakone Museum, and the Kuni family were produced in the Offices for Copying Scriptures. However, in the opinion of Akiyama Terukazu: "These scrolls do not seem to be of the same lineage: those in the Hōon-in and Jōbon-rendai-ji appear to belong to a set distinct from that from which those in the Hakone Museum and Tōkyō University of Art come."³⁰ (They may of course be the work of different copyists in the same bureau.) Sections of yet another early scroll, cut up many years ago, are in several collections in Japan and abroad.

In all of these versions the pictures illustrating the familiar story of the Life of the Buddha run along above the text, the successive incidents linked in a continuous landscape that sweeps along, sometime in the easy wave-like movement of an open landscape, sometimes broken by rocks and hills that separate one incident from another, sometimes abruptly interrupted by the city wall (plates 68-74). There is a strong feeling of lateral movement through the scroll, and some variation in depth, as streams wind forward, rocks and walls slope diagonally backward; but never do they reach to the horizon as they do at Tunhuang, for there is no horizon. Recession is confined to a depth of fifty yards or so. This is deliberate, for only thus could the lateral movement through the scroll be preserved. The only point at which a vista opens out to a distant horizon occurs (plate 70) appropriately at the moment in the text where the artist is attempting to convey the idea of infinity in pictorial terms.

The style of the landscape in the three best known versions is subtly different, showing that they are by different artists. That of the Tōkyō University of Art scroll is relatively naive, the repeated slabs of rocks being rendered in a linear technique with little modulation of the wash within the contour, and the trees are stiffly repeated. The landscape in the Jōbon-rendai-ji scroll is still somewhat linear, but there is more variety in the handling of space and of the individual rocks. The Hōon-in landscape is the most interesting. The line is more sensitive, the forms of the rocks more three-dimensional, the washes more suggestive of texture, the trees more sensitively drawn, while the artist here and there achieves a delightful effect of *chiaroscuro*.

An examination of the scrolls in the Tōkyō University of Art and Jōbon-rendai-ji shows that essentially the same technique was used for both. The rocks were first drawn lightly with a brush and a light inner wash was applied, over which was laid a wash of mineral colour in an oil base. In the Tōkyō version, further washes of malachite or azurite were applied to model the rocks, and here and there a red or reddish-brown. The mineral colours were first dissolved in an animal gum base which has sunk within the paper and leaves a brown stain wherever the colour itself is gone. The wash is applied like watercolour, very thin in some places but, being mineral, not quite transparent, breaking up into minute granules of pure pigment. After the colour washes had dried, the painter sometimes worked on the modelling with dry brushstrokes of dark greyish ink.

The contours are sketched in with a suave but subtle line. The interior texture is indicated not by broken ink but by colour washes that are applied in a somewhat arbitrary fashion to emphasise

the edge of the contour rather than to articulate the inner structure of a rock or hill, which is suggested rather by the drawing itself. Indeed, the way in which the washes are applied suggests that their purpose is often decorative rather than structural. Whether this truly reflects the technique of the Chinese original, or is merely a shortcut taken by the copyist with what he considered the least important part of the illustrations, it is impossible to determine. The fragment in the Seattle Museum shows clear signs of the rather heavy and meaningless later retouching that is so obvious on some of the rocks on the Shōsōin screen panels.

One technical device used in the Tōkyō University of Art and Jōbon-rendai-ji versions, but not in the Hōon-in version, does not to my knowledge occur in any other early landscape scrolls: namely, the double line which often outlines a rock or hill, giving it a slab-like appearance (plate 73). In some places it emphasises the three-dimensional effect; in others it appears as a technical mannerism, or perhaps a device misapplied because the copyist did not fully understand its function. We have seen the same double line technique in the rocks in the 1-*te* tomb landscapes of 706 (plate 34).³¹ Throughout, the painter seems to have been at some pains to see that his pictorial technique was not overemphatic, distracting the eye from the sacred text below it. Outlining the rocks with thin double lines, rather than a single heavier or more modulated line, may have been a way of ensuring that the drawing did not attract too much attention to itself. In the Hōon-in version this sense of plasticity is achieved by more skilful drawing and a subtler use of ink wash.

Several features of the landscape treatment are archaic: the naive proportion of figures to trees, hills, and buildings (men can easily peep over the city wall); the *ch'ieh*-shaped hill that thrusts out here and there; and the vignette of the young prince and his friends seated before trees in a bower enclosed by a broad band of reddish-brown wash (plate 74), a curiously crude convention that seems to recall the setting of the huntsmen on Biwa A in the Shōsōin. We can assume that these archaisms reflect, in varying degrees, the conventions of the Chinese originals, placing them early in the T'ang Dynasty or possibly even in the Sui. The style of the figures also is that of the early T'ang Dynasty. But technique poses a more serious problem. Akiyama is of the opinion that while the Hōon-in scroll "seems to copy faithfully the archaic style of the original Chinese *sūtra*, the Jōbon-rendai-ji copy shows a greater freedom of expression, both in the painting and in the calligraphy."³² Certainly the latter is less subtle in handling and more schematic, hence, we can conclude, further from the Chinese original. How far any of the versions can be taken as guides to early T'ang landscape technique is debatable; but as a whole they do seem to represent an early stage in development of the painterly style.

THE TUNHUANG BANNERS AND SCROLLS: EIGHTH AND NINTH CENTURIES

Even more than the wall-paintings, the Tunhuang banners present formidable dating problems. Very few are dated, and it would be misleading to suggest that the best examples of the painterly

style represent either a climax in the mid-eighth century or the maturity of the ninth. With so few dated documents of the period of the Tibetan occupation (776-848), it is reasonable to assume that, likewise, relatively fewer banners were produced during that period. If so, did the Chinese reoccupation at once lead to a fresh injection of the current styles from Ch'ang-an, or was there a revival then of a local tradition? This is difficult to answer, and so I have not divided the painterly banners between the eighth and ninth centuries, but discuss them purely in terms of technique, taking the best and clearest first.³³

The best known Chinese example of the painterly style so far published is a strip of scenes from the Life (Stein 97) which may once have been a side panel from a large paradise composition but is now mounted separately (plate 75). We see, from above downwards, Śākyamuni saying farewell to his groom Chandaka and his horse Kanthaka, the Cutting off of the Hair, and the Austerities, skilfully linked in a continuous landscape. The use of the space cell is here quite appropriate, and there is a suggestion, in the upper scene, of the old *ch'ieh*-shaped overhanging rock. The rocks and cliffs are strongly modelled; highlights and shadows are contrasted, facets of rocks being emphasised by the darkening of the neighbouring areas, with effective modulations of tone in the lighter areas. The articulated line is firm and varied, often thickened to a knot at the beginning of the stroke, or where it changes direction. Ink wash is laid on with long, sweeping strokes and shorter touches, and here and there a hollow is emphasised by a sudden blackening of the ink, as in the painting of tree roots. Varied as the handling of ink is, there is as yet (as on the Shōsōin Biwa B, plate 51) no systematic repetition of texture strokes such as seems to have developed in the tenth century.

The fragment (plate 76) depicting the Bath in the Lumbini Gardens and the First Seven Steps (Stein 99) is chiefly of technical interest because the sloping side of the raised terrace of ground on the left is indicated with slanting strokes laid on with the side of the brush, suggesting a primitive form of the axe-cut *ts'ui*. The well-known fragments depicting the Simultaneous Births (Stein 94) are painted in a broader technique, the more relaxed, less jerky movement of the brush suiting the pasture-like setting (plates 77 and 78). Enlarged details show that the painter lightly sketched in the hills and animals before going over the line again, with no loss of liveliness, in darker ink.

A rough example of the painterly style is the badly damaged and fragmentary banner (Stein 20) depicting a standing Buddha on the Vulture Peak (just visible, right) attended by a saint. Behind the main group is a suggestion of a landscape in which we see a priest calling the attention of passers-by to a Buddha image, and a horseman riding through the hills preceded by a man carrying a red banner. Waley dates the fragment to the ninth century; the crude but very Chinese handling of the brush in the landscape would suggest a date not long after the Chinese reoccupation of 848.

A fragment of another banner (Stein 100) shows Śākyamuni practising austerities in a cave, an illustration to the *Lalitavistara* (plate 79). The rhythmic flow of the rocks in the foreground is repeated in the crags on the left, but in the centre the line is more jagged and broken, to sug-

gest the harsh, inhospitable landscape in which Śākyamuni drove himself to the brink of death. Although not very skilful, the artist did succeed through his technique in pointing the contrast between this bleak scene and the calm setting, immediately below it, of the bath in the Nairanjana River, with which Śākyamuni washed away the effects of his austerities.

Plates 80 to 84, from a paradise of Śākyamuni (Stein 1), tells the story of the seven-year-old Sujāti, who fled with his princely parents from the revolt of the Minister Rahula. They show: the flight over the city wall (80); the trio resting in a meadow (81); Sujāti sitting naked on a rock (82), receiving the last piece of flesh below and being abandoned by his parents above (83); Sujāti his parents below, attacked by a white lion to test his steadfastness (84). In general, the painting of the rocks is a cruder version of the painterly style of plate 75. The outline is firm, but the artist does not seem to have known what to do with it. The humped hills that wind forward to separate the scenes (plates 80, 82) are monotonously handled; and the artist, having drawn in plate 80 the long curving "spine," was unable to model the rock around it. Perhaps we encounter here a primitive form of the "dragon vein," *lung-mo*. The distant crags in plate 81 make use of the old *ch'ieh*, here exaggerated to the point of meaninglessness, while it is misapplied to the interior of the hill in the centre of plate 83. Light and shade are handled with little understanding.

Both the perfunctory brushwork and the stiff, unnatural trees in plates 83 and 84, similar to the trees in Cave 112, suggest that the artist was drawing on an old, stale repertoire of forms, the original meaning of which was lost. The style of the figures is that of the ninth century rather than the eighth.

Whatever the artist of the next banner (Stein 2, plate 85) lacked, it was not confidence. The scene of perils (such as being pushed off a cliff) from which Avalokiteśvara saves the faithful is taken from a painting of the deity in the six-armed form of late T'ang date. The Avalokiteśvara is drawn with meticulous care; the side scenes may well be by another hand, for they are dashed off with dramatic if crude force. Although the broken washes are few and carelessly applied, the line is swift and calligraphic, while a firm modelling is achieved by strong contrasts of tone.

One of the finest of the Tunhuang banners is the large paradise of Bhaishajyaguru in the British Museum. Down the right side runs a series of the nine forms of violent death from which the Buddha rescues the faithful. In plate 86 we see a man being flogged in the presence of a magistrate, another with a falcon, a third being led away by a demon; in plate 86 a man flying from a lion and tiger, while below another kneels on the edge of a bed before a demon who has apparently poisoned him. The outlines are linear rather than calligraphic and so do not marry so well with the broken washes of the interior of the rocks.

Plate 90 shows a detail of a mandala of the thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara (Stein 1000B), in which a mountainous landscape rears up to fill the upper left corner of the composition. The triangular peaks built up with superimposed lesser peaks appear also on Cave 159 (dated 781), though not so clearly marked as here. The outlines are sharp as in the previous example and there is the same chiaroscuro effect to accentuate the edges of the planes. There is little feeling for rock texture, the ink being laid on somewhat artificially in carefully graded washes. The painting,

however, is too badly damaged, and too much is missing, to give more than a suggestion of the brush technique.

LATE T'ANG WALL-PAINTINGS AT TUNHUANG

The ninth-century wall-paintings at Tunhuang—or rather the small fraction of them that have been adequately reproduced—present an incomplete and confusing picture of landscape style of the period. Hardly any are dated, and all we can do is give a general impression of how landscape was treated there.

The Tibetan occupation of 776–848 was the chief reason for the marked decline in quality and quantity of landscape scenes. Esoteric Buddhism placed all the emphasis upon the mandala, none on a setting that might suggest *this* world. Itinerant Chinese artists were replaced by Tibetans and Uighurs, and those Chinese painters who remained under the occupation became more and more isolated from the mainstream of Chinese painting as the years went by. They developed bad landscape habits, repeating and distorting old styles and conventions till they became meaningless.

With the liberation of the Tunhuang region in 848 and the reestablishment of Chinese patronage under Chang I-chao and his descendants, there was inevitably a revival of Chinese influence. This shows best in figure painting, particularly in the splendid processional scenes in Cave 156, painted about 860, in which Chang I-chao with his entourage, and Lady Sung with hers, move across a broad plain. But landscape painting did not recover in the same way, and even where Chinese influence is apparent, the rendering is often slipshod (as in the boneless landscapes behind the processions) or borders on fantasy. Plate 87 illustrates the landscape that fills the upper panel of the West wall of Cave 112 above a paradise group.³⁴ Flat, spiky mountains break out into absurdly exaggerated *ch'ieh* that spout waterfalls in unlikely places. Raised paths snake among the peaks, and a donkey drinks from an impossible pool. The trees, in contrast to those on either side of the main Buddha group, are very crudely drawn, suggesting that landscapes and figures are by different hands. The line is nervous and lively but lacking in structural power, while colour is confined to washes of malachite that sweep along the upper edge of the contour as in the Hōryūji Kondō detail in plate 38.

This travesty of the linear manner of the eighth century suggests that the artist was inspired by earlier frescoes and borrowed their technique and conventions without really understanding them. Yet the very element of unreality here does effectively suggest the unearthly quality of the landscape of paradise. But whether the insubstantiality of this landscape is the result of the artist's incompetence or of his deliberate intention is an intriguing question to which we will never know the answer.

The element of fantasy is present also in the landscape above the Buddha group on the main south wall of Cave 369 (plate 88).³⁵ The central peak is in fact the tip of a vast pippala leaf that fills the whole panel, enclosing the Buddha group below. The peaks on either side create the

traditional tripartite division, which itself forms another with the peaks at either end of the panel. But the composition is saved from too rigid a symmetry by jutting platforms on either side of the central massif. Lesser hills in between and a row of mountains on the horizon give a sense of depth lacking in the landscape of Cave 112, which is not completely destroyed by the crude painting of trees and clouds, now blackened by oxidisation. The technique seems to aim at the painterly, for the washes are somewhat varied and broken, but the line is thin and inexpressive, and there is no real feeling for texture. This may be regarded as a weak attempt at a painterly style by an artist not trained in the Chinese manner of using the brush. The composition of the landscape on the other wall (plate 89), instead of closing over the head of the Buddha, opens out into a broad view to infinity, for there is no horizon. Strange, flat, leaf-like mountains are ranged back one behind the other, as are the flat mesas that provide a horizontal contrast. It is curious that on both these walls the painter makes both the sides of all his mesas slope to the left: a naive misuse of the convention.

It is tempting to see in the exaggeration and fantasy of these landscapes a change that was now taking place not only in Chinese painting but in Chinese poetry also: a change towards the rejection of naturalism, and towards a love of formal distortion and extravagant effects for their own sake. But there is no evidence that the painters at Tunhuang during or after the Tibetan occupation were susceptible to this influence. The fact that it is possible to raise the question at all, however, suggests that while the immediate causes of these developments at Tunhuang and in metropolitan China may have been very different, the actual results so far as painting itself was concerned may have had something in common.

The next three examples, all ninth-century work, may be taken as illustrating the return to Tunhuang of Chinese influence after the expulsion of the Tibetans and some attempts at a renewal of the painterly style. A range of distant cloud-ringed hills stretches across the horizon in a detail from Cave 12. The line is firm, more confident and "Chinese" than the feeble line of Cave 369, and the ink wash is better integrated, giving a greater feeling of solidity. The painting of the tree trunks immediately below also suggests a Chinese hand. The same confident use of the brush can be seen in the range of mountains on the horizon of Cave 198 (plate 91), and much more simply on the silk banner painting in the British Museum depicting Vaiśravaṇa and his entourage crossing the ocean (plate 92). The technique of the former is to some extent a throwback to the archaic, scalloped mountains painted in coloured bands that the painter must have seen in Cave 249 (*The Birth*, plate 106) and may have admired for their gay, decorative effect.

All the above examples are more or less painterly. The natural settings in some other late caves at Tunhuang are so boneless as hardly to suggest a landscape at all. This is particularly curious in the case of the processional scenes of Chang I-chao and Lady Sung (plate 93) in Cave 156 (circa 860). The figures are excellently painted in the Chinese manner, but the landscape—perhaps because a more perfunctory treatment sets the figures off by contrast better—consists merely of vague horizontal washes of malachite green. Sweeping washes of green also form the background of the lively and well-painted scenes in Cave 196 (plate 94); the contrast between

the vivid action of the storm-tossed Raudraksha and the calm horizontal sweeps of the background is both dramatically and pictorially effective, but it has nothing whatever to do with landscape painting. An equally crude handling of bands of green forms the landscape setting of the perils scenes in Cave 288 (plate 95).

The story of landscape at Tunhuang does not end with these feeble efforts. There was to be a great upsurge in the tenth and eleventh centuries, but by then Tunhuang was not dependent on a weak local tradition but was receiving fresh stimulus from post-T'ang developments in metropolitan China.

Trees and Plants: Notes Towards a Repertory

In *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China* I attempted to compile a systematic, though admittedly far from complete, "grammar" of pre-T'ang trees and plants. I am now much less confident than I then was that it is possible to identify plants represented in early Chinese art, but it seems worth at least attempting a similar compilation for the Sui and T'ang periods, for which there is substantially more material surviving in the form of original paintings. The chief value of such a repertory is stylistic or technical rather than botanical, for while it is possible in the details of paintings illustrated here to distinguish clearly between conifers and flat-leaved (more correctly called broad-leaved) trees, precisely which species or variety the painter intended is much more difficult to determine. It may indeed be questioned whether he had a particular tree in mind at all, except in certain obvious cases such as the pine, the weeping willow, and the ginko. In fact, in the famous how-to-do-it book *The Painting Manual of the Mustard Seed Garden* (Chieh-tzu-yüan hua-chuan, 1679), the student is seldom told what tree or plant he is learning to paint. The pictures of typical foliage, for example, apart from a few identified leaves, are labeled as dotting "like mouse-tracks," "like small eddies," "like sprinkling of pepper," "in the form of a chrysanthemum," "in groups of three or five strokes." By contrast, the section on flowers is quite specific as to what flower is represented. I am inclined to believe that often painters did not have any particular tree in mind. What they sought was to depict typical trees appropriate to the setting and season, and to dispose them in the picture with pleasing variety.

So my classification is equally broad. I have divided the flat-leaved trees into two groups: those with broad leaves and those with narrow leaves. The broad leaves would include such trees as the maple, plane, catalpa, lime, sycamore, tulip tree; the narrow leaves—or rather, thin leaflets radiating from a point or arranged on either side of a long stem—include weeping willow, white

willow, locust, and ailanthus (tree of heaven). It need hardly be said that there is no botanical justification whatever for this classification. It is made merely for convenience, and because examination of all the available material suggests that the T'ang painter did generally distinguish between these two types, however wayward or inaccurate he was about particular species. I have added a few especially clear pre-Sui examples for comparison.

The details are arranged in roughly chronological order in each section. With the examples so few, and so clearly unrepresentative of the best of T'ang landscape painting, however, I do not feel justified in attempting to trace any clear stylistic development in, for instance, the painting of pine trees or bamboo between the beginning and end of the T'ang. These details can in any case give us no more than an impression of T'ang style. But they do show beyond doubt that the codification of leaf types, whether or not they were meant to represent a particular tree, was well under way by the T'ang Dynasty.

I. CONIFERS

The pine is perhaps the most frequently painted tree in Chinese art, and the most pregnant with symbolism and poetic association. The pine tree stands for the endurance of the human spirit in old age or adversity; the "old tree," stripped to its core and symbolic of essential integrity, is generally a pine or a cypress. The poetic uses of the pine tree are legion.¹ It suggests the recluse, high up on a mountainside, as in these lines of Wang Wei on the forest pavilion of his cousin Ts'ui Hsing-tsung:

The green trees give layers of shade
in all directions
The green moss thickens daily
and so there is no dust
He sits legs outstretched hair unkempt
under the tall pines
And regards with the whites of his eyes
the rest of the world.²

The shadows of the pines "sweep the clouds flat" in a poem by Tu Mu;³ the sound of the wind in the pines is strongly evocative, as in Meng Chiao's lines:

A long wind drives the pines and cypresses
With a sound which sweeps the thousand hollows clean.⁴

Just what kind of pine tree is being represented in T'ang painting is not easy to tell, although the trees in the Chang Huai tomb (R11) are very suggestive of the common Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). Ching Hao in his essay *Pi-fa chi* (early tenth century) distinguishes between the pine (*sung*) and the *po*—a name that could refer to the cypress or the red cedar, *Thuja plicata* or *Arbor vitae*, an evergreen with short "needles" close-fitting round the twig—a distinction from the

conventional pine-needles that is not clearly made in surviving T'ang painting. "The true nature of a pine tree," Ching Hao writes,

is as follows: it may grow curved, but never appear deformed and crooked. It looks sometimes dense and sometimes sparse, and neither blue nor green. Even as a tiny sapling it stands upright and aims to grow high, thus already showing its posture of independence and nobility. Even when its branches grow low, sideways or downwards, it never falls to the ground. In the forest the horizontal layers of its branches appear to be piled upon the other. Thus . . . they are like the breeze of the virtuous [which passes over the bowed heads of the humbly respected]. Sometimes a pine tree is painted as a flying or coiling dragon, with its branches and leaves in maddening disarray. It does not represent the *spirit-resonance* of pine trees.

The *po* tree has the following true nature: it grows full of movement and has many turnings. Its trunk has many knots and is clearly sectioned. Its twisting patterns grow so as to follow the movement of the sun. Its leaves are [rugged] like knotted threads and its branches are [angular] like hemp clothes [on the body]. Sometimes the tree is painted with its leaves [smooth] like snakes and its branches [supple] like silk clothes. Or at times it is drawn with its inside hollow and its twisted patterns inverted. These are all wrong.⁵

The pine is the only tree in the Chinese painter's repertoire which became a genre in itself: we never hear of painters who specialised in, say, the willow or the catalpa. The reason is not merely the richness of its moral and literary associations, but because its very shape and form, its trunk straight or powerfully twisted and articulated, with its strong accents at the joints, and even its sharp array of needles, were, like the bamboo, ideally suited to a display of virtuosity with the brush. Unchanging with the seasons, appropriate colour is never a factor; the painter can express himself, and the spirit of the pine trees, in ink and brush alone. We need only read a contemporary description of Chang Tsao's rendering of the theme (Chapter V) to see what a challenge it presented. Most of what survives from the T'ang is mere artisans' work; only the two fragments from the Astana tombs (R20, R21) give more than a hint of how the major painters might have met the challenge.

- R1. Pine tree beside Ch'i K'ang, one of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove. Stamped brick relief (rubbing) from tomb at Nanking. IV/Ve. Ch'i K'ang's friend Shan T'ao described him as "lofty . . . like the independence of a solitary pine," so the appearance of the tree beside him here is appropriate. It should be noted that none of these scenes contain bamboo, which can be explained by the fact that these gentlemen were sometimes called the Seven Sages of the Forest.
- R2, R3, R4, R5. Details from Filial Piety scenes. Engraved sarcophagus, Nelson Gallery, Kansas City. Second quarter of VIe.
- R6. Landscape detail. Tunhuang Cave 296. Sui Dynasty.
- R7. Painted "screen" on back wall of Tomb 65 TAM, Astana, Sinkiang. T'ang Dynasty. Second tree from left may be a Wellingtonia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*).
- R8, R9. Painted panels on wall of tomb at T'ai-yüan, Shansi. Early VIIIe.
- R10. Landscape on wall of entrance shaft (copy). Tomb of I-te, Ch'ien-hsien, Shensi. 706. These look like the cypress (*po*).

- R11. Row of pine trees on west wall of entrance shaft of tomb of Chang Huai, Ch'ien-hsien, Shensi. 706. Although the foliage (except for the extreme tops of some of the trees) is painted with the double lines of the "narrow-leaved" trees illustrated below in section II B, these beautifully drawn trees have the general character of the Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*).
- R12. Row of trees, with horsemen and pack-camels, on right wall of entrance shaft of tomb of Chang Huai. 706.
- R13. The Hermit's Retreat. Painted tray no. 6 (line drawing). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R14. Mountain Landscape with Tiger and Pines. Painted tray no. 4 (line drawing). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R15. Mountain Landscape with Dragon Pool amid Pines and Clouds. Painted tray no. 1 (line drawing). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R16. Landscape. Top of box painted in gold and silver. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R17. Gentlemen Playing Chess in a Grove of Bamboos and Pines. Plectrum-guard of lute (copy). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc. The flowering vines, suggesting wisteria, are a common convention in T'ang painting, and appear hanging from a variety of trees.
- R18. Ancient juniper, sketched on underside of painted tortoise-shell plaque on side of zither. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R19. Pine trees behind Buddha assembly. Tunhuang, Cave 148, dated 775. Although not clearly visible in the photograph, these are among the best surviving examples of T'ang painting of pine trees.
- R20. Ancient pine trees, painted in ink on silk. Fragment of a large Buddhist banner. Astana cemetery, Sinkiang. IXc?
- R21. Ancient pine trees, painted in ink on silk. Fragment. Astana cemetery, Sinkiang. IXc?
- R22. Pine and other trees. Detail of landscape attributed to Ching Hao. Xc? Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City.

II. FLAT-LEAVED TREES

A. Broad leaves:

a. General

- R23. Tree beside Hsiang Hsiu, one of the Seven Sages. Stamped brick relief (rubbing) from tomb of Nanking. IV/Vc.
- R24. Tree beside Juan Hsien, one of the Seven Sages. Stamped brick relief (rubbing) from tomb at Nanking. IV/Vc.
- R25. Trees beside Jung Ch'î-ch'î (the happy recluse encountered by Confucius). Stamped brick relief (rubbing) from tomb at Nanking. IV/Vc. Possibly a *yu-t'ung* tree.
- R26. Tree beside Ch'î K'ang, one of the Seven Sages. Stamped brick relief (rubbing) from tomb at Nanking. IV/Vc.
- R27. Tree behind Ch'î K'ang; perhaps a ginkgo. Stamped brick relief (rubbing) from a second Nanking tomb. IV/Vc.

- R28. Tree in front of Ch'ü K'ang; perhaps a *wu-t'ung*. Stamped brick relief from a second Nanking tomb. IV/Vc.
- R29. Tree in front of Juan Hsien. Stamped brick relief (rubbing) from a second Nanking tomb. IV/Vc. The name Shan Su-t'u (Shan T'ao) behind him seems to be out of place, as neither of these gentlemen is Shan T'ao.
- R30. Wind-blown tree (magnolia?). Engraved sarcophagus. Nelson Gallery, Kansas City. First half of VIc.
- R31. Old tree (laurel?). Engraved sarcophagus. Nelson Gallery. First half of VIc.
- R32. Detail of landscape on ceiling. Tunhuang, Cave 285. Northern Wei Dynasty.
- R33. Detail of landscape on ceiling. Tunhuang, Cave 299. Sui Dynasty. A variety of trees is represented, the only recognisable one being the weeping willow, extreme right.
- R34. A further variety of trees from ceiling of Cave 299, Tunhuang. Sui Dynasty.
- R35. Trees in a hunting scene (copy). Tunhuang, Cave 419. Sui Dynasty. The variety of leaf patterns here seems to be purely decorative.
- R36. Jataka scenes. Tunhuang, Cave 303. Sui Dynasty. There are two types of tree here: a fairly naturalistic one that is full of movement, and a stiff one with straight trunk and foliage regularly disposed in clumps on the main axis or on either side of it. In T'ang painting at Tunhuang these latter crude trees only appear in second-rate work; they seem quite provincial and possibly non-Chinese in origin.
- R37. Pilgrims? in a mountain landscape. Tunhuang, Cave 296. Sui Dynasty. A refined and rather archaic linear style. The treatment of the branches, ending in triple finger-like twigs, goes back to Han art. Compare, for example, trees painted on the front and sides of the large pottery house model in the Nelson Gallery (*The Birth*, plates 17, 18, 19).
- R38. The Buddha preaching in a grove of trees. Maichishan, Cave 27. Early VIIc. Although difficult to make out in the reproduction, these are among the most elegantly painted trees in surviving late Sui or early T'ang art.
- R39. Tree beside standing Mañjuśrī. Tunhuang, Cave 276. Early VIIc. The heart-shaped leaf suggests the pipala (*Ficus religiosa*, "bodhi tree"; compare *The Birth*, fig. 64d).
- R40. "Screen" of men under trees, painted on rear wall of Tomb 65 TAM 38, Astana, Sinkiang. Dated 676. The reproduction is not clear enough to make a positive identification of these trees. All are equipped with trailing vines.
- R41. Gentleman under a tree. Wall-painting from tomb at T'ai-yüan, Shansi. Late VII or early VIIIc.
- R42. Landscape with elephant-borne musicians. Lower half of painting on plectrum-guard of Biwa C (plate 52). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc. Visible are hanging vines and a tree with red leaves (suggesting autumn) carefully displayed in a manner very similar to that of a tree in Cave 419, Tunhuang (R35 above).
- R43. Ornamental tree. Textile. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R44. Ornamental tree. Textile. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R45. Ornamental tree with hanging vines. Lacquered zither. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R46. Monk and youth under trees. Copy of wall-painting in Cave 17, Tunhuang. Late T'ang.



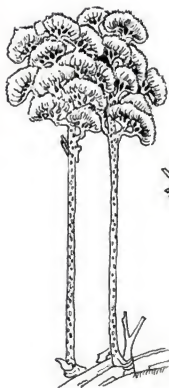
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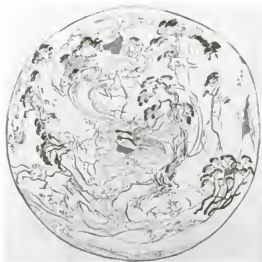
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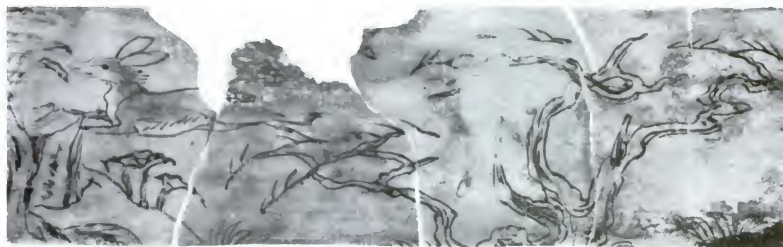
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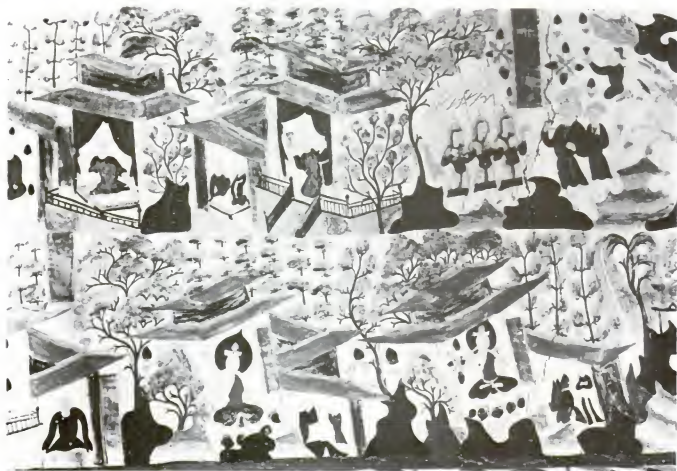
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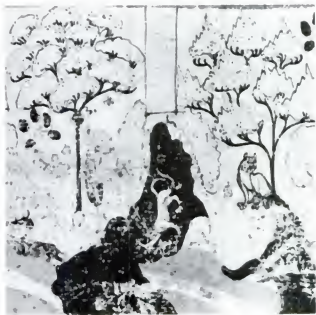
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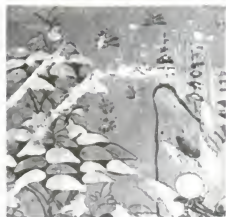
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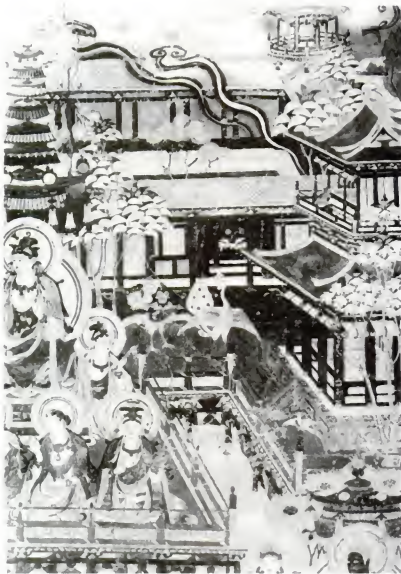


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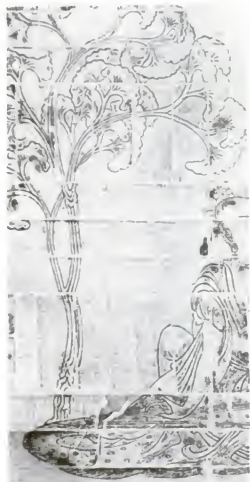
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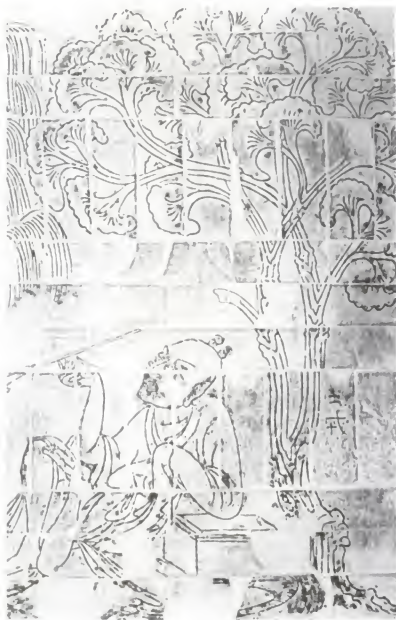
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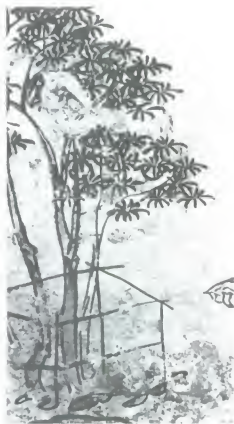
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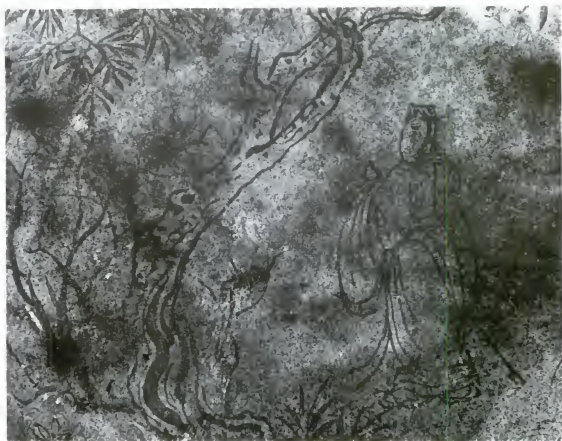
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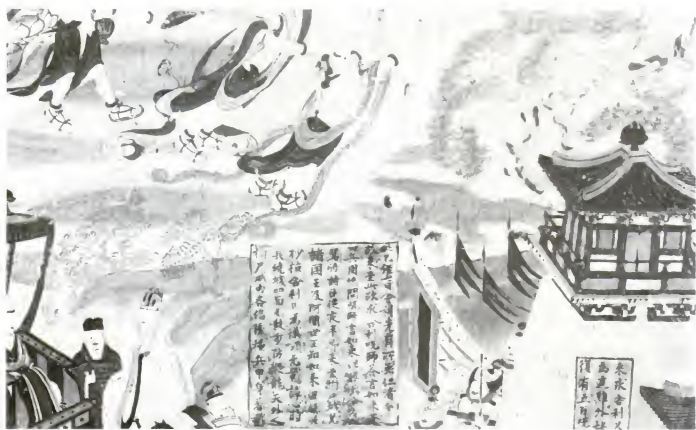
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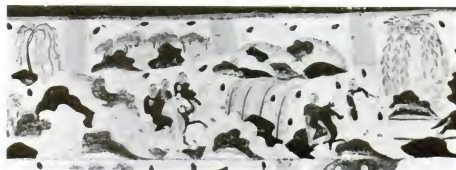
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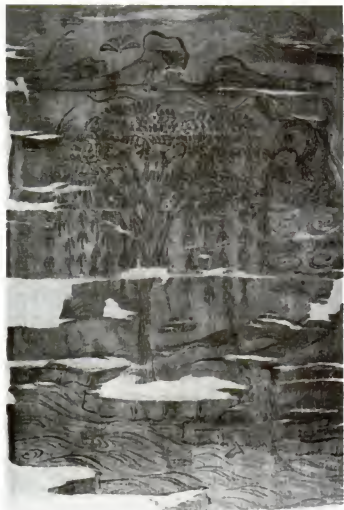
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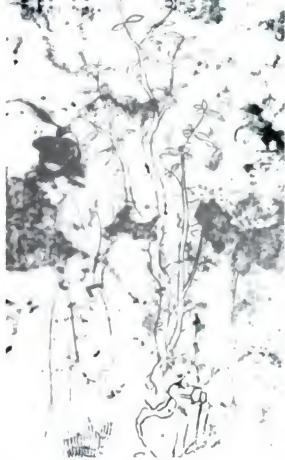
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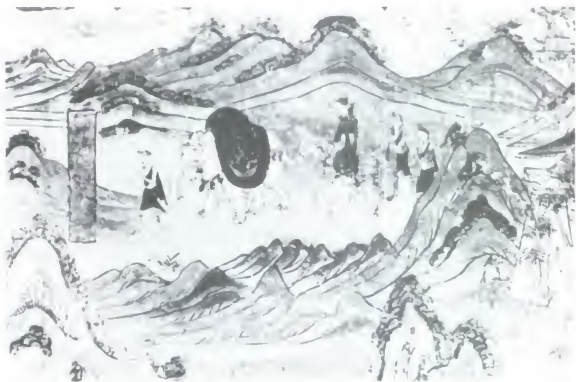
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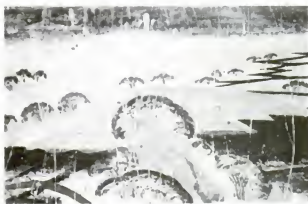
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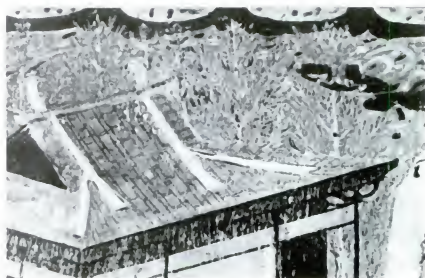
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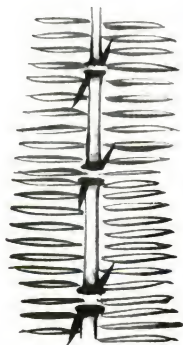
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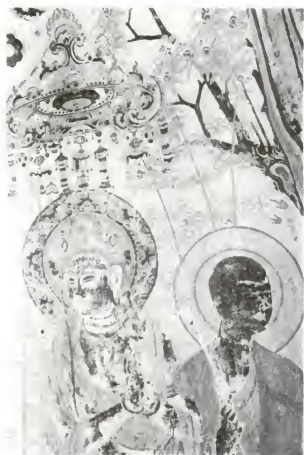
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R 170



R 171



R 172

R47. Detail of foliage of above.

R48. Detail of climbing and hanging vines of above.

R49. Arhat seated, under a maple? Tunhuang, Cave 95. Late T'ang.

b. Jewelled Trees

Some trees in T'ang Buddhist painting are attempts to render the Indian mango, *sāl* and *pippala*, unknown to Chinese except through travellers' accounts. Others have no counterparts in the natural world: the "jewelled trees" enumerated in descriptions of the paradises, those for example that are found in the *Sukhāvatīyūta* or in *Āśvaghosa's Saundarānandakāvya*, Description of the Happy Land, translated into the Chinese in the third century. Here is a typical passage from the latter:

There some trees change their appearance with the six seasons, while others display splendid glory of all seasons all at once. Some bear manifold garlands and wreaths, fragrant, beautiful and already tied together, and also posies which fit the ear so perfectly that they seem superior to ear-rings. Some trees flower with red lotuses in full bloom, and look as if covered with lamps; on others again grow blue lotuses in full bloom, and they appear to have wide-open eyes . . . And, most excellent of all, the celestial coral tree rises up in unrivalled majesty.⁶

R50. Preaching Buddha and Maitreya. Tunhuang, Cave 314. Early T'ang.

R51. Vimalakīrti debating with Mañjuśrī. Tunhuang, Cave 314, northwest angle. The tree on the right behind the pavilion, and that on the adjacent wall extreme right, look like the mango. The tree in the centre suggests a *pippala* or *catalpa*.

R52. Preaching Buddha with bodhisattvas. Tunhuang, Cave 322. Early T'ang.

R53. Queen Vaidehī contemplates a jewelled tree; below are two trees suggestive of the mango. Tunhuang, Cave 320. First half of VIIIc.

R54. Queen Vaidehī contemplating the setting sun. Tunhuang, Cave 320. First half of VIIIc. The huge leaf, like that of a *catalpa*, appears only in Buddhist painting, often, as in R55 and R56, accompanied by large and improbable blossoms.

R55. Feasting scene. Tunhuang, Cave 12. IXc.

R56. Paradise of Bhaishajyaguru Vaidūrya Prabhāsa. Banner, detail of right side. From Tunhuang. British Museum. Late T'ang.

R57. Flowering tree behind Buddha assembly. Tunhuang, Cave 112? Late T'ang.

R58. The Bodhisattva as an ascetic patiently suffers mutilation at the instigation of a jealous king. Illustration to a Jātaka. Ceiling painting. Tunhuang, Cave 85. Late T'ang.

R59. Detail of a Paradise scene. Yü-lin, Cave 17, south wall. Late T'ang. The similarity in style and composition to the Tunhuang banner (R56) is remarkable.

R60. Detail of a Paradise scene. Yü-lin, Cave 17, west wall. Late T'ang.

c. Wu-t'ung

The *wu-t'ung* (*Sterculia platanifolia*) was an auspicious tree in Han China, for it was the only one on which the phoenix deigned to alight.⁷ Later it lost its magical associations, and we do not

find the phoenix-*wu-t'ung* theme in T'ang art. Instead, it became poetically evocative: it was the sound of the rain falling on the *wu-t'ung* leaves that moved the poets, or the autumn wind tearing them from the branches, as in the opening of Li Ho's "Autumn Comes": "The wind in the *wu-t'ung* startles the heart, a lusty man despairs . . ."8 or in these lines from Meng Chiao's "Autumn Thoughts":

The *wu-t'ung* wilted, looming high,
Sounds and echoes like strings sadly plucked.⁹

However, the *wu-t'ung* tree is by no means easy to identify in early Chinese art. It may be confused with the pawlonia or the catalpa, as in the first example below.

R61. Tree in front of Ch'i K'ang, Stamped brick relief (rubbing) from tomb at Nanking, IV/Vc. (See also R29).

R62. Elephant beneath tree with monkey. Batik painting, Shōsōin Repository, Nara. First half of VIIIc.

R63. Attributed to Chou Fang: *Tuning the Lute and Drinking Tea*. Handscroll, detail. Nelson Gallery, Kansas City. T'ang.

R64. Anonymous. Ming copy after Yen Li-pen: *Ch'en Yüan-ta Narrowly Escapes Death at the Hands of Lin Ts'ung*. Handscroll, detail. Freer Gallery, Washington, D.C. Although remote from the T'ang Dynasty, the carefully rendered foliage preserves something of T'ang flavour.¹⁰

d. Ginkgo

R65. Behind Ch'i K'ang, one of the Seven Sages. Stamped brick (rubbing). Nanking. IV/Vc.

R66. Behind Wang Jung, one of the Seven Sages. Stamped brick (rubbing). Nanking. IV/Vc.

R67. Side of Buddhist stone stele. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. VIc.

R68. Lady beneath a ginkgo. Panel no. 1 from a six-panel screen. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc. Although this screen has been heavily restored, the shape and arrangement of the leaves remain essentially unaltered.

R69. Detail of Panel no. 4, from six-panel screen. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.

B. *Narrow Leaves*

a. General

R70. *Ailanthus* (tree of heaven)?—behind Juan Chi, one of the Seven Sages. Stamped relief (rubbing). IV/Vc.

R71. Trees in landscape behind city wall. Entrance wall of Tomb of I-te, Ch'ien-hsien, Shensi. 706 (copy). Note that two types of leaf are depicted, those on the trees in the centre pointed and ranged along the stem, those on the right with more rounded ends and radiating from one point.

R72. Trees in hunting scene on west wall of entrance shaft of Chang Huai tomb. 706.

R73. Detail of tree in foreground of polo-playing scene on west wall of entrance shaft of Chang Huai tomb. 706.

- R74. Trees in garden; east wall of rear chamber of Chang Huai tomb, 711.
- R75. Trees in garden; east wall of rear chamber of Chang Huai tomb, 711.
- R76. Corner of a fortified monastery. Tunhuang, Cave 103, south wall (detail). Late VIIIc. The crudely drawn trees in the centre might be bamboos, painted by a desert artisan who had never seen them.
- R77. A Chinese pilgrim received by a royal personage. Tunhuang, Cave 217, south wall, right. First half of VIIIc. A variety of trees, mostly with narrow leaves, very well drawn.
- R78. Detail lower left of R77.
- R79. Landscape sketched on hemp cloth, detail. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc. This may be a preparatory sketch for embroidery.
- R80. Scholar under a tree. Painted tray no. 2 (copy). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R81. Peacock confronting a tree (locust?) Painted tray no. 9. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R82. Detail of original of R80.
- R83. Jitoku-ten (Dhṛtarāstra) standing beneath a tree (locust?). Shrine door no. 1, lacquered in gold and silver (copy). Shōsōin.
- R84. Landscape painted on plectrum-guard of Biwa B (copy). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R85. Man and servant under tree. Wall-painting from Astana cemetery, Sinkiang. National Museum, Tokyo. VIIIc.
- R86. Detail of R85.
- R87. Lady and servant under tree. Wall-painting from Astana cemetery, Sinkiang. Atami Museum. VIIIc.
- R88. Detail of R87.
- R89. Queen Vaidehī meditating beneath a tree. Tunhuang, Cave 320. First half of VIIIc.
- R90. *The Encounter with the Sick Man*, Tunhuang banner (Stein 88). British Museum. Second half of T'ang Dynasty.
- R91. *Official Standing beside a Shrine*. Ink sketch on plaster, detail. Cave 9, Tunhuang. IXc.
- R92. *The Return to the Palace*. Tunhuang, Cave 148. VIIIc.
- R93. Ornamental tree. Cave 2, Yü-lin, Kansu. X-XIc?
- R94. Attributed to Sun Wei (IXc): *Four Worthies*. Detail of a handscroll. Shanghai Museum. Possibly a Northern Sung copy.
- R95. Attributed to Sun Wei (IXc): *Four Worthies*. Detail of a handscroll. Shanghai Museum. Possibly a Northern Sung copy. The tree is probably a locust.
- R96. Anonymous. Ming copy after Yen Li-pen: *Ch'en Yüan-ta Narrowly Escapes Death at the Hands of Liu Ts'ung*. Handscroll, detail. Freer Gallery, Washington, D.C.

b. Weeping Willow

If the weeping willow has any associations in Chinese landscape painting (generally it has not), it is as a symbol of melancholy, connected with a parting, as in Wang Wei's typical "End of Spring near the River Su":

It was near Kuangwu City
 I met the end of spring
 A traveller returning from Wenyang
 handkerchief wet with tears
 Silent silent falling flowers
 birds crying in the hills
 Green green the willows
 at our crossing place.¹¹

The weeping willow is often painted beside a placid lake or stream, suggesting spring or a quiet summer day.

- R97. Tree beside Shan T'ao, one of the Seven Sages. Stamped brick relief (rubbing) from tomb at Nanking. IV/Vc.
 R98. Wind-blown tree. Engraved sarcophagus. Nelson Gallery, Kansas City. First half of VIc.
 R99. *Jātaka* scene. Tunhuang, Cave 302. Sui Dynasty.
 R100. The Rūru Jātaka. Tunhuang, Cave 301. Sui Dynasty.
 R101. Man beneath tree. Tomb 4, Chin-sheng-ts'un, T'ai-yüan, Shansi. Late VIIc.
 R102. Man beneath tree. Tomb 4, Chin-sheng-ts'un, T'ai-yüan, Shansi. Late VIIc.
 R103. Chinese pilgrim received by royal personage; weeping willow in the centre. Tunhuang, Cave 217, south wall. First half of VIIIC. Detail of the composition in plate 18.
 R104. Meditations of Queen Vaidehī. Tunhuang, Cave 45. VIIIC.
 R105. Unidentified subject. Tunhuang, Cave 112, south wall. Early IXc.
 R106. Donor procession. Copy. Tunhuang, Cave 130. Cave restored and repainted in 886.
 R107. *The Search for the Prince*. Tunhuang banner fragment (Stein 305). British Museum. Second half of VIIIC.
 R108. *The Birth of the Buddha*. Tunhuang banner fragment (Stein 91). British Museum. Second half of VIIIC.
 R109. *The Bath in the Nairanjanā River after the Austerities*. Tunhuang fragment (Stein 100). British Museum. IXc.

C. Garden Plants

A variety of plants are grouped under this heading, from small ornamental or flowering trees to bushes and shrubs.

- R110. After Chan Tzu-ch'ien? *Spring Journey*. Detail of a handscroll.
 R111. Man with hawk beside a Japanese maple. Second compartment, east wall, tomb of I-te. 706.
 R112. Men with cheetahs beside small trees and bushes. First compartment to passage wall, tomb of I-te, Ch'ien-hsien. Shansi. 706.
 R113. Man with hawk beside syringa(?). Second compartment, west wall, tomb of I-te. 706.

- R114. Ladies with butterfly nets beside a tree. Third compartment, west wall, tomb of I-te. 706.
 R115. Ladies in a garden. Third compartment, west wall, tomb of I-te. 706.
 R116. Ladies in a garden. Third compartment, west wall, tomb of I-te. 706.
 R117. Ladies catching cicadas and watching birds beside a tree. Front chamber, west wall, tomb of Chang Huai, Ch'ien-hsien, Shensi. 711.
 R118. Ladies and youth in a garden. Tomb of Chang Huai. 711.
 R119. Ladies in a garden. Tomb of Chang Huai. 711.
 R120. Cover of Brāhmarāja Sūtra. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
 R121. Painted textile. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
 R122. Plectrum-guard of lute (much restored). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
 R123. Decorated top of zither (drawing). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
 R124. Attributed to Chou Fang: *Tuning the Lute and Drinking Tea*. Detail of a handscroll. Nelson Gallery, Kansas City.
 R125. *Sākyamuni's Farewell to His Horse and Groom*. Tunhuang banner fragment (Stein 95). British Museum. Second half of T'ang Dynasty.

D. Distant Trees

In the rendering of distant trees the painter often seems to have used a freer and sketchier brushwork; so that when enlarged these trees give an impressionistic effect partly through lack of detail in the foliage. The only surviving examples of this ink technique applied to painting on silk are the maps in the Shōsōin, utilitarian things that give scarcely a hint of the free ink style of the eighth and ninth century masters.

- R126. Watering the animals. Tunhuang, Cave 302. Sui Dynasty.
 R127. Detail of landscape behind Mañjuśrī. Tunhuang, Cave 276. Early T'ang, VIIc.
 R128. Buddha preaching in a landscape. Tunhuang, Cave 209, left wall. VIIc. The crude drawing lower left was done by one of a party of White Russian soldiers who took refuge in the caves after World War I.
 R129. Another detail from Tunhuang, Cave 209. VIIc.
 R130. Pairs of animals in a boneless landscape. Tunhuang, Cave 321. VIIc.
 R131. Travellers attacked by robbers. Tunhuang, Cave 45. Early VIIIc.
 R132. Travellers and pilgrims in a landscape. Tunhuang, Cave 217, south wall. First half of VIIIc.
 R133. Travellers in a landscape. Tunhuang, Cave 103. First half of VIIIc.
 R134. Map (detail) of Kusooki Village, Asuha County, Echizen Province. Shōsōin. Dated 766.
 R135. Trees in a flat plain beside a river. Tunhuang, Cave 172. 746-755 era. Such a landscape, so familiar to someone at Tunhuang, could scarcely have been found in central China.
 R136. Detail of landscape on a banner from Tunhuang. Stein 97. British Museum. Second half of T'ang Dynasty.

- R 137. Tunhuang, Cave 198. IXc. A decadent and perfunctory treatment of distant mountains and trees that reflects the effects of the Tibetan occupation of 776–848.

III. BAMBOO

Bamboo painting in the T'ang Dynasty is discussed in detail in Chapter VI. Surviving T'ang examples are surprisingly few, perhaps because it was not a subject that lent itself easily to decorative wall-painting.

As these few specimens show, some painters drew the stem (as Su Tung-p'o later recommended) in a single sweeping stroke of the brush (R 142, 148, 149, 155, 157); others emphasised the joints (R 143, 147, 150, 154, 156). Two sixth-century Chinese styles of bamboo painting are represented on the Tamamushi Shrine, possibly the work of a Korean immigrant to Japan. The Sui examples from Tunhuang tend to be symmetrical and formalized, the leaves crowded in rows along the stem or main branches. The T'ang examples from Tunhuang are more luxuriant and show greater variety in the handling of the leaves.

- R 138. Young bamboo and bamboo shoots behind coffin of the filial Ts'ai Shun's mother. Engraved stone sarcophagus. Nelson Gallery, Kansas City. First half of VIc.
- R 139. Bamboo growing beside a stream. Tunhuang, Cave 296. Sui Dynasty.
- R 140. Detail of R 141 redrawn.
- R 141. Grove with bamboo and flowering trees. Tunhuang, Cave 419. Sui Dynasty.
- R 142. Screen of bamboo behind pavilion in which Mañjuśrī sits. Upper left corner of west wall of Cave 420, Tunhuang. Sui Dynasty. There is a similar setting for the Vimalakīrti in the upper right corner.
- R 143. Saint? worshipping a Buddha before a bamboo grove at the foot of the Vulture Peak, Grdhrakūṭa. Tunhuang, Cave 420, ceiling. Sui Dynasty.
- R 144. Detail of R 143 redrawn.
- R 145 and R 146. Illustrations to Jātaka tales. Oil painting on the base of the Tamamushi Shrine, Hōryū-ji, Nara, Japan. Suiko Period, early VIIc.
- R 147. Bamboo behind bodhisattva attendant on a preaching Buddha. Tunhuang, Cave 322, east wall. 698. This setting of the subject gives a very Chinese flavour to a composition that is usually set about with flowering trees.
- R 148. Bamboo behind bodhisattvas and worshippers. Tunhuang, Cave 203, west wall. Late VIIc.
- R 149. Bamboo? growing beside a tree on east wall of entrance passage of tomb of Chang Huai, Ch'ien-hsien, Shensi. 706. I am not positive of the identification, but it looks much more like bamboo than like the tree beside which it is growing.
- R 150. Attendant ladies in bamboo grove. East wall of rear passageway of tomb of Chang Huai, Ch'ien-hsien, Shensi. 711. Bamboo, probably by the same hand, is painted on the east wall of the rear chamber of this tomb.
- R 151. Gentleman in a bamboo grove. Tomb 4, T'ai-yüan, Shansi. Early VIIIc.¹²
- R 152. Queen Vaidehī meditating. Tunhuang, Cave 217, north wall. First half of VIIIc.

- R153. Ingakyō scroll (detail). Jōbon-rendaiji, Kyōtō. VIIIc.
- R154. Gentlemen playing chess in a grove of pines and bamboos. Decorated plectrum guard of lute (infra-red photograph). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R155. Scholars enjoying wine and music in a grove of bamboo and flowering trees. Inlaid zither (detail). Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R156. Bamboo behind seated Buddha. Tunhuang. Cave 124, north wall. IXc.
- R157. The water-moon Kuan-yin, shui-yüeh Kuan-yin, seated on a rock in a setting of bamboo and other plants. Painted on paper (53 x 37cm). Musée Guimet, Paris. Late IX-early Xc. Four representations of this theme, three with bamboo, were found among the Tunhuang scrolls.¹³ Two are in the British Museum, two in the Musée Guimet (one of these is dated equivalent to 943). In the late eighth century Chou Fang had painted this subject. Arthur Waley went so far as to suggest that all the later versions were based on Chou's painting; but there is no proof of this.
- R158. Bamboo and flowering trees behind bodhisattva and arhat. Yü-lin, Kansu, Cave 19, south wall. X-XIc?
- R159. Attributed to Sun Wei (IXc). *The Four Worthies*. Detail with bamboo (?) and rock. Part of a handscroll. Shanghai Museum.

IV. BANANA

The banana was a popular plant in T'ang gardens. The familiar fruit-bearing varieties grew in south China, but "north of the passes" the banana had only a red flower, and was admired by the poets. "It was the *sound* of the huge leaves," writes Edward Schafer, "even more than their shape or colour, which gave a unique atmosphere. The wind rustling them, the rain dripping from them, enhanced the slightly melancholy or introspective mood associated with darkness, or storms, or decay, or autumn."¹⁴ And he quotes from T'ang verses that illustrate the mood they evoke:

"The wind plays with the red banana, with sound of leaf on leaf" (Tu Hsün-ho),

or

The rain drips down where the banana is red;

The frost breaks off where the tangerines are yellow . . . (Ts'ên Ts'an)

- R160. Banana behind the coffin of Ts'ai Shun's mother. Engraved sarcophagus. Nelson Gallery, Kansas City. First half of VIc.
- R161. Tunhuang, Cave 431. VIIc.
- R162. Biwa inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R163. Textile, decorated with flowering banana? Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R164. The Flight of Sujāt. Banner from Tunhuang. British Museum. Mid-T'ang.
- R165. Banana beside seated Buddha. Banner from Tunhuang. British Museum. IXc.
- R166. Banana behind a screen in illustration to the Lotus Sūtra. Tunhuang, Cave 85, ceiling. Late T'ang: IXc.

- R167. Attributed to Sun Wei (IXc). *The Four Worthies*, detail with banana and rock. Part of a handscroll. Shanghai Museum.

V. LIANES, CREEPERS, AND HANGING VINES

A fairly common convention in early Chinese landscape painting is the creeper or vine, sometimes hanging from a tree, sometimes from a cliff. This would be one of several plants: the tropical rattan vine, *t'eng* (*Berchemia scandens*), with small greenish-white flowers in a terminal cluster; the dodder, *t'u-ssu* or *ssu-t'u* or in a poem of Tu Fu's called *nü-lo* (*Cuscuta*), a parasite with small yellow or white bell-like corollas and tiny, almost invisible leaves; or such familiar climbers (*lo*) as the wistaria (*lo-t'eng*), clematis, or morning-glory. Many of our examples appear in details listed elsewhere in this Repertory.

- R5. Creeper hanging from an old juniper in the illustration to the story of the filial Yüan Ku. Engraved stone sarcophagus. Nelson Gallery, Kansas City. First half of VIc.

- R7. Painted "screen" on back wall of Tomb 65 TAM 38, Astana, Sinkiang. VIIc. Here the convention runs riot, as each of these trees is adorned with a vine.

- R17. Gentlemen playing chess in a grove of bamboo and pines. Plectrum-guard of lute. Shōsōin. First half of VIIc.

- R42. Landscape with elephant-borne musicians. Biwa C plectrum-guard. Vines hanging from cliff at left and tree on right. Shōsōin. First half of VIIc.

- R45. Plectrum-guard of lacquered zither. Shōsōin. First half of VIIc.

Plate 39. Tunhuang, Cave 103. VIIc.

Plate 45. Anonymous. *Ming-huang's Journey to Shu*. Rattan growing up and over tree to left of central clearing. Copy of VIIc work?

- R47. Tunhuang, Cave 17. VIIc.

- R104. Tree behind Queen Vaidehi's attendants. Tunhuang, Cave 45. Early VIIc.

- R77. Vines hanging from trees in background. Tunhuang, Cave 217. First half of VIIc.

Plate 29. Tunhuang, Cave 205. Mid-VIIc.

Plate 87. Vine hanging from "jewel tree," lower left. Tunhuang, Cave 112. Second half of T'ang Dynasty.

Plate 89. Vine hanging from "jewel tree," lower left. Tunhuang, Cave 369. Second half of T'ang Dynasty.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

- R168. Tree behind worshipping monks and arhat. Maichishan, Cave 127. VIc. This tree is drawn with a freedom and grace unmatched in any other surviving examples of Chinese painting of this early period.

- R169. Attendant carrying miniature garden, *p'ao-ching*. East wall of entrance passage of tomb of Chang Huai, Ch'ien-hsien, Shensi. 706. For a discussion of miniature gardens, see Chapter VI.
- R170. Date palm with confronting lions. Twill. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc. A decorative motif copied from Sasanian art.
- R171. Ornamental tree with ram. Shōsōin. First half of VIIIc.
- R172. Bare tree behind meditating monk. Ink on paper. From Tunhuang. British Museum. Late T'ang Dynasty.

Epilogue: *The Legacy of T'ang Landscape Painting*

The picture I have given in these pages of the development of T'ang landscape painting is a very fragmentary one—and most fragmentary, alas, in the period which may have seen the greatest advances and the most daring technical experiments, the ninth century. Yet we cannot leave the subject of the evolution of T'ang landscape style without at least a glance at its legacy; for as the tree is known by its fruit, so may the masterpieces of the T'ang be known by later works which owe their very existence to the achievement of the T'ang masters. My selection among these later paintings is small and arbitrary, for this is not a book on the landscape painting of the tenth century, still less on that of the Ming Dynasty, but it may suggest by implication how far T'ang landscape painting had advanced to make these later works possible.

I have already discussed *Ming-huang's Journey to Shu*, and its even more squeezed-up version to which the name of Li Chao-tao was attached by the critic Sung Ch'eng-tse. They need not be mentioned again, except to say that both are of much later date, and that both may derive from an extended handscroll of the T'ang period. Another much later work which may derive from a T'ang original is the *Ten Views of a Thatched Cottage*, attributed to Lu Hung (plate 105).¹ While the brushwork is typically Ming, the composition is in some respects very archaic (notably in the handling of space cells), which here and there recalls the stone engravings after the Wang-ch'uan scroll, in the distorted scale of trees, buildings, and human figures, and in the stiffly drawn plants. The handling of the groups of trees suggests a possible inspiration in a version by a conservative Yüan artist such as Ch'ien Hsüan.

An important document in early Chinese landscape painting is the landscape in the Nelson Gallery, Kansas City, bearing the signature of Ching Hao, which is said to have been discovered in a tomb in Shansi (plates 106–109). There is nothing in securely datable T'ang painting to compare with this fascinating work. The composition, dominated by its central massif rising to

the top of the picture, and the pronounced S-curve, remind us of the Kuo Hsi *Early Spring* of 1072 and of the *Travellers in the Mountains* attributed to Kuan T'ung but probably a Northern Sung work. But it is possible that this type of composition goes back to the late T'ang. The Nelson Gallery landscape is comparatively free of obvious archaisms, unless we include the figures "coming round the mountain," and the exaggeratedly overhanging *ch'ieh* at the top of the picture—but as these persist into Sung painting they offer no clue to dating. The architecture and bridge picked out in vermilion recall the same use of colour in the Chan Tzu-ch'ien (plate 41) and the recently excavated tenth-century landscape from Liaoning discussed below. The handling of the landscape elements, buildings, bridges, fences, and human figures is firm and assured. There is a variety of trees, including groups of pines standing dramatically against a dark background, which in their general appearance recall those in the 1-*te* tomb paintings (see plates 34–37) but are more vigorously executed, while the foliage ranges from impressionistic dotting to the conventional narrow leaves radiating from a point, common in T'ang art. Barely visible in the lower left is a convention for foliage much used in later painting but of which I know no other example as early as this.

Laurence Sickman, who has studied the technique of this painting with great care, describes it as follows:

The painting is, indeed, done in white, being a very austere and chill winter scene. (Could it be from a set of the Four Seasons?) This is apparently an archaic manner which finds some echo in the small painting of a river landscape in winter reproduced in Volume 3 of Sirén, plate 97, a painting which I have never seen [plate 100 in the present volume]. It does have the interesting parallel that the figures in this small picture are also painted white, as are the figures in ours.

As to the technique, we have gone over it with some care, and it has had a thorough physical examination at the Freer. I have also had the advantage of consulting with several knowledgeable Chinese. The main outlines of the picture, rocks, mountains, etc., were first done in black ink. A white pigment of varying thickness, but for the most part rather heavy, was then applied over the rocks, tree trunks, figures, etc., with many of the distant trees painted entirely in white. The outlines and inner markings, including the inner markings of the trees, were then again reinforced with black ink. In short, the surface was worked over with considerable care. There is a slight amount of colour in the curved bridge which is vermilion, and vermilion details on the temple at the head of the valley.

There has unfortunately been a certain amount of retouching done by the Peking mounter, despite our instructions to the contrary. A splendid series of ultraviolet photographs taken at the Freer reveal these areas of restoration quite clearly, as the old ink apparently did not register. For the most part the restorations are mostly reinforcements and have no effect on the character of the brushwork or the composition, with two notable exceptions, the outline at the very top of the central great peak on the right has been continued over so that it seems to join with the pointed peak in the far distance. Originally this line continued down the whole side of the central mountain, making it much more of a unit, and throwing the smaller peaks on the upper right into the proper distance.

The other error was in outlining the small *p'o* or plateau toward the top of the peak. This does break into the composition and is rather clumsy . . .

An interesting feature is that the white is a lead white, as are, I believe, all early paintings, including those from Tun-huang, and calcium white was not introduced until a somewhat later period. Being lead, it registers beautifully on an X-ray plate, and we have an extremely interesting X-ray detail which of course eliminates all the carbon ink and leaves only the white. One can see from this how the painting was constructed.²

In texturing the rocks, the artist has used a variety of strokes: long ragged ones, short "axe-cut" ones, blobs of ink to give accents and washes to give modelling and, often, a dramatic chiaroscuro. The ink strokes sometimes enhance the texture and modelling but, while full of nervous energy, are not always informative. Sometimes they seem to split and tear the rocks apart, reminding us of the T'ang master Chu Shen, noted for the "splintery look of his rock markings" (see Chapter V), and we cannot always be sure what a particular dot or stroke is meant to do. On the other hand, there is no repetition of conventional texture strokes, *ts'ün*; the pictorial vocabulary is still not formalised, and the painting lacks the textural unity found in the work of Northern Sung masters such as Fan K'uan and Yen Wen-kuei. A ninth- or early tenth-century date for this unique work seems entirely possible. A similar inconsistency, or mixing of techniques, can be seen in the handscroll *First Snow on the River*, attributed to the tenth-century master Chao Kan. As long ago as 1962 James Cahill pointed out the use of a painterly technique in an isolated detail, which he considered an innovation of the tenth century.³

Although less vital in its execution, the landscape excavated from a Liao tomb in Liaoning in 1974 represents a more consistent use of the brush in the painterly style, suggesting a slightly later date (plate 111).⁴ It too preserves archaic features, the smooth-topped overhanging *ch'ieh* in the centre being the most obvious. The convention of leaving the upper surface of the ground blank, while richly modelling the undercut sides, derives from T'ang practice and persisted into the Sung—as for example in the *Winter Landscape*, attributed to Kao K'o-ming and dated 1035, in the Crawford Collection in New York.⁵ But there is here a simple consistency, even suavity, in the use of the brush to achieve a unified texture throughout the picture that is not present in the Nelson Gallery painting; long vertical strokes on the mountains set down for their elegance of effect rather than as expressive gestures in their own right suggest that the language of the brush is moving towards that conventionalisation against which, throughout the later history of Chinese landscape painting, the masters would strain, and from which the second-rate would derive support.

Something of the same quality is present in the landscapes behind the figures of Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī on the west wall of Cave II at Wan-fu-hsia, known only through photographs taken by Mr. and Mrs. James Lo in 1942–1944, and never before published (plates 110 and 112). They seem to be by different artists, the former more accomplished than the later. The landscape behind the Mañjuśrī group is fantastic, and crude in its handling of form and space, the artist making much use of heavy ink blobs—ancestor of the *tien*—in the middle of rock faces.

The Samantabhadra panorama is more complex and interesting, being divided into a series of space cells in which various buildings and incidents are depicted, wrapped around by the landscape in a manner that has its roots in the space cells of the early T'ang caves at Tunhuang (plates 12 and 19). The strong verticals of the mountain on the left are a simpler echo of the treatment in the Liaoning scroll; the artist here also uses the blob of ink to suggest a hollow, or point an accent. While crude by comparison with the pictures we have been describing, these Wan-fu-hsia murals are of great interest for their handling of ink and of open space. Until they, and the caves as a whole, have been adequately published, a date, on stylistic grounds, in the early Northern Sung period seems quite possible.

An important series of wall-paintings of the four seasons on the wall of a royal tomb in Liaoning has been dated by Japanese archaeologists to the reign of the Liao emperor Sheng-tung (983-1031) or Hsing-tung (1031-1055). The paintings (plate 110) have long since faded away, and exist only in the dim photographs by Torii Ryūzo and in a deceptive copy of the *Autumn Landscape* by Torii Midori (plate 112), in which the fine, sensitive line and delicate tonal gradations of the originals gives way to a hard, clear line and much cruder tonality.⁶ But enough survives to show that these charming landscapes preserved certain T'ang characteristics: simplicity of form; linear technique, with mineral colours lightly brushed in; careful disposition of trees, often on the edge of a contour, with each leaf separately drawn; overhanging *ch'ieh*; broken ink (the painterly technique) confined to outcrops of rock as in the Chang Huai tomb paintings (plates 47 and 48); tufts of grass and flowering plants dotting the flat areas; a line of clouds scudding across the top of the picture (compare Tunhuang, plate 91). These landscapes seem, for their probable date, old-fashioned. At the same time they provide an important link between one tradition of T'ang decorative wall-painting and the Yamato-e style of Heian-period Japan; so a brief look at Yamato-e painting, in which elements of T'ang style are preserved, blended, and transformed, would not be out of place.

The rapid development of the painterly style in the second half of the T'ang Dynasty meant that the boneless and the linear either were relegated to a subordinate position in professional painting or disappeared altogether. The boneless style left its chief legacy in Japan, where it formed the foundation of the Yamato-e tradition. Just why this is so is not altogether clear. It may be that the Japanese painters attached to the Bureau of Painting, E-dokoro, were, like their Chinese predecessors, primarily illustrators and decorators, to whom a flat, colourful, and cheerful style was more natural than one based on the calligraphical use of brush and ink—as it would have been more appealing to their courtly patrons. But while the techniques of the works discussed below can in almost every respect be traced directly to China, the particular combinations of those techniques, the blending of the linear, the boneless, and the painterly in one picture, and the emphasis on colour and decoration for their own sake, are purely Japanese. As they did with the garden, the Japanese in the Yamato-e took over a Chinese art form, and by a change of emphasis and attitude made it a true expression of Japanese sensibility.

Bonelessness in its almost pure state is preserved in the charming landscapes with Buddhas and worshippers (plate 116), executed in gold and silver on blue paper, which decorate some of the set of 2,739 Sūtra scrolls of the Heian period in Chūson-ji.⁷ The landscape setting is of the utmost simplicity, while the delicate drawing of the trees and the use of gold and silver paint suggest possible Korean influence. Far more splendid in scale and execution are the painted doses of the Byōdō-in at Uji, dated 1053.⁸ Here the boneless landscapes are executed in broad washes, chiefly of green and white, with here and there a muted outline to the contour of a hill.

In the scroll painting known as the *Iron Pagoda* (plate 117), illustrating the scene in which Zemmui (the T'ang period translator Śubhakarasiṃha) miraculously obtained in scriptures,⁹ the landscape is not quite boneless, for there is a combination of washes of colour on the broad extended surfaces with ink modelling on their sides and undersides, such as we have already seen in Chinese examples, and in the water and branches. This is an early example in Yamato-e style of the move towards a combination of the boneless and painterly techniques in the same painting. Another combination of techniques can be seen in the eleventh-century Tōji screen in the National Museum, Kyōto (plates 118 and 119). The landscape is basically drawn in the linear manner, with some breaking of the line, and the addition of washes of mineral colour. Considered in Japan an example of *Kara-e* (Chinese painting), this famous work combines Chinese techniques with the Japanese penchant for decorative simplicity.

Examples in early Japanese landscape art of a pure painterly style are comparatively rare, partly because, as I have suggested, it did not lend itself so readily to decoration or to the filling of the background behind the main figures, partly because it was closely connected with the calligraphic use of brush and ink, a discipline in which the Japanese craftsmen painters would not have felt completely at home. A wonderfully conceived early example of a painterly landscape, now so darkened and damaged as to be barely decipherable, surrounds the Buddha group in the *Hokkedō Kompon Mandara* in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (plate 120).¹⁰ The rocks turn this way and that, piling up in towering crags rent by chasms, with waterfalls and winding streams, and set about with a variety of trees. The brushwork is delicate, but articulated and expressive, the rocks being more richly modelled with broken washes, more varied and subtle than those of Biwa C in the Shōsōin (no doubt owing to the difference in medium) but not yet formalised into a conventional language. This painting is generally considered a work of the late eighth or early ninth century, and gives us a hint of what a Chinese work of the mid-T'ang might have looked like.

In the landscapes in the corner of *Nirvāna* of Kongobū-ji (plates 121, 122), dated 1086,¹¹ the painterly manner is handled more freely than in the great Boston painting, but with less understanding of the structural and expressive function of the individual brushstrokes, as though a craftsman painter were aping his betters. But the very inexpressiveness and repetitiveness of the brushstrokes has a decorative quality, and represents one step towards the fully synthetic Japanese style.

Although probably slightly later in date than the *Nirvāna*, the *Amida Raijō* of Kongobū-ji (plate 123)¹² is, in the landscape detail in the lower left corner, more sensitively executed, and closer in technique to its Chinese models. However, the undulating sweeps of the lower slopes, contrasted in simplicity with the intricacy of the rocks and trees, is visually striking in a very Japanese way. Early Chinese artists, so far as we know, never achieved so successful a marriage of two such different styles; and when they attempted it in the Ming Dynasty, as for example in Lü Chi's *Winter* in the Palace Museum, Taipei, the result is cold and totally lacking in the charm that this detail reveals. In my last example from the Heian period, one of a set of sixteen scrolls of arhats in the National Museum, Tōkyō, the painterly style is used for the rock pedestal and for the tree trunk (plate 124). The broken ink texture strokes are, in the Japanese fashion, as decorative as they are structural—more so, indeed, for in spite of all the modelling the effect is curiously flat. Here, and henceforward, the Japanese artist is using a Chinese technique strictly on his own terms.

It would be interesting to pursue this analysis down the centuries. We could, for example, trace one kind of synthesis, or mixing of techniques, in the *Sanzui-byōbu* (landscape screen) in Jingo-ji, Kyōto, another in the Kitano Tenjin Engi scrolls, a third in the *Ippen Shōnin Eden*; we could even follow vestiges of T'ang techniques down through the Tosa school illustrators and Kanō school decorators to Sōtatsu and Kōrin. In Japanese art the legacy of the T'ang was a constant, and constantly changing, element in a living tradition; but in China, when it appears in the art of later dynasties, it is often a fanciful, self-conscious revival, an expression of the sense of history that was a passion with the intellectuals and instinctive even among the professional painters. By the tenth century it had done its work; but the far more subtle and expressive landscape painting of the Northern Sung is witness to the firm foundation that the T'ang masters had laid.

A Note on Sources

The main early source for the study of Sui and T'ang painting is Chang Yen-yüan, *Li-tai ming-hua chi* (Record of Famous Painters of Successive Dynasties), preface 847, abbreviated *LTMHC* in the footnotes. Certain sections of this work seem to have been written after that date, however, and Chang was still living in 874. I have used the punctuated *Hua-shih ts'ung-shu* edition (Shanghai, 1963). My quotations are largely taken from William R. B. Acker, *Some T'ang and Pre-T'ang Texts on Chinese Painting*, vols. I and II (Leiden, 1954 and 1974). The various editions of the *LTMHC* are discussed in Acker vols. I, 383-385, and II, 303; see also Hin-cheung Lovell, *An Annotated Bibliography of Chinese Painting Catalogues and Related Texts* (Ann Arbor, 1973), 100.

The second most important source is Chu Ching-hsüan, *T'ang-ch'ao ming-hua lu* (Record of Famous Painters of the T'ang Dynasty), compiled in the early 840's, here abbreviated *TCMHL*. I have used the edition in the *Mei-shu ts'ung-shu* (1947). For an English rendering, see Alexander C. Soper, "T'ang Ch'ao Ming Hua Lu," rev. tr., *Artibus Asiae* 21.3/4 (1958), 204-230; and see Lovell, *op. cit.*, 99.

The Chen-kuan kung-ssu hua-shih (or *hua-lu*) (Record of Paintings in Public and Private Collections in the Chen-kuan Era, 627-650, preface 639) by P'ei Hsiao-yüan lists 293 paintings ranging in date from Chin to early T'ang, and forty-seven temples in different cities with frescoes by well-known artists. It is included in the *Mei-shu ts'ung-shu*, and *I-shu ts'ung-p'ien*. See Lovell, *op. cit.*, 1.

Other early works quoted by Chang Yen-yüan, and now lost, are the following: Sun Ch'ang-chih, *Shu-hua chi* (c. 502-520); the monk Yen-ts'ung, *Hou-hua lu* (preface 635); Li Ssu-chen, *Hua-p'ing* (shortly after 673); P'ei Hsiao-yüan, *Hua-lu* (probably written before 639); Tou Meng, *Hua-shih i-lu* (about 790); Chang Huai-kuan, *Hua-tuan*, or *Hua-p'iu-tuan* (first half of eighth century).

Notes

CHAPTER I

1. This is the *Chen-kuan kung-ssu hua-shih* (see Note on Sources).
2. The work of these and other painters is discussed in Chapter IV.
3. *LTMHC* I, 4-5; see also Acker I, 126-127 (see Note on Sources).
4. For the story of the Lan-t'ing script and its theft, see Chu-tsing Li, *A Thousand Peaks and Myriad Ruines: Chinese Paintings in the Charles A. Drenowatz Collection* (Ascona, 1974) I, 13-14. Chu-tsing Li, in pointing out that the whole story is apocryphal, follows the view put forward by Kuo Mo-jo debated in *Wen Wen* 1965, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12.
5. Li Shih-min, "To the Tune of Horses Drinking by the Great Wall," in *Ch'uan T'ang Shih* bk. 2; there is a very free translation by Wang Sheng-chih in Robert Payne, *The White Pony* (New York, 1947), 176.
6. See, for instance, my *Birth of Landscape Painting in China* (London, Berkeley, and Los Angeles, 1962), 102-105.
7. *LTMHC* I, 5; Acker I, 128.
8. The changing moods of T'ang literary culture are vividly brought out in John C. H. Wu, *The Four Seasons of T'ang Poetry* (Tōkyō and Rutland, Vt., 1972).
9. Wang Wei, *Wang Yun-cheng chi chien-chu* (1736) chap. 3; tr. G. W. Robinson, *Poems of Wang Wei* (Harmondsworth, 1973), 93.
10. *LTMHC* I, 5; Acker I, 128-129.
11. *LTMHC* I, 6; Acker I, 136-141.
12. *LTMHC* II, 27-28; Acker I, 204-205.
13. Chang Yen-yüan says, "I have seen things painted by him and they were very fine," and notes that his landscapes looked like those of Li Chao-tao. *LTMHC* IX, 111. Acker II, 244.
14. *LTMHC* I, 2, 5.
15. This is well brought out in Angus Graham's anthology *Poems of the Late T'ang* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Classics, 1965).
16. *Chun-chia chu Tu shih* ed. (1811), XII, 169; tr. A. R. Davis, *Tu Fu* (New York, 1971), 51.
17. *Po Hsiang-shan chi* (Hong Kong, n.d.), 363; tr. Gladys Yang, *A Short History of Chinese Classical Literature* (Peking, 1958), 64.
18. "Neo-Confucianism in T'ang Intellectual Life," in Arthur Wright, ed., *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford, 1960), 113.
19. Kuo Jo-hsü *T'ü-hua chien-wei chih* (*Hua-shih ts'ung-shu* ed.) V, 77; tr. A. C. Soper, *Kuo Jo-hsü's Experiences in Painting* (Washington, D.C., 1951), 85.

20. Basic Sinological Series chap. 26, p. 16; tr. Arthur Waley, *The Life and Times of Po Chü-i* (London, 1949), 149.
21. See Liu Tsung-yüan (773-819), "Yung-chou pa-chi," in *Ho-nung hsien-sheng chi* (Shanghai, 1958) chap. 29. See also Ch'ên Shou-yi, *Chinese Literature: A Historical Introduction* (New York, 1961), 305, for a translation of the description of the rocky pool west of the Ting mount.
22. *T'u-hua chien-nen chih* V, 77; tr. Soper, *op. cit.*, 84, 197 n. 657.
23. For details of this grim page in Chinese history, see H. S. Levy, tr., *The Biography of Huang Ch'ao*. University of California Dynastic History Translations Series, no. 5 (Berkeley, 1955).
24. *Ch'ien T'ang Shih* (Peking, 1960), 4364; tr. Graham, *op. cit.*, 85.
25. *LTMHC* V, 16; Acker I, 152.
26. *Li Ch'ang-chi ko shih* (Peking, 1959), 101; tr. J. D. Frodsham, *The Poems of Li Ho* (Oxford, 1970), 125.
27. *T'u-hua chien-nen chih* II, 18; tr. Soper, *op. cit.*, 24.

CHAPTER II

1. See Arthur Waley, *The Life and Times of Po Chü-i* (London, 1949), 126.
2. *LTMHC* VIII, 97; Acker II, 194-195 (see Note on Sources).
3. *LTMHC* IX, 103; Acker II, 209.
4. *LTMHC* IX, 105; Acker II, 215.
5. *LTMHC* IX, 105; Acker II, 214.
6. Yonezawa Yoshihō, "On the Origin of the Hua-yüan or Art Academy in the T'ang Dynasty of China," *Kokka* 554 (January 1937) 3-9.
7. For instance, Chao Te-ch'i, Lü Yao and Chu Chien.
8. Acker in his translation of the later chapters of *LTMHC* renders the term *hua-chih* as "in attendance," but it seems simply to mean "painter attached to"—as in the case of Yang Ning, a figure painter, and presumably an illustrator, attached to the College of Annalists, Shih-kuan hua-chih (*LTMHC* IX, 112).
9. *T'z'u-hai* vol. I (Shanghai, 1947), 655. The term Shao-fu-chien referred both to the supervisorate and to the supervisor.
10. *LTMHC* IX, 111; Acker II, 245-246. *TCMHL* 6 places him in the "inspired class," bottom grade.

He was a painter chiefly of Buddhist subjects, human figures, flowers, birds, and bamboo.

11. For some illuminating comments on this matter, see Hans H. Frankel, "T'ang Literati: A Composite Biography," in Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Confucian Personalities* (Stanford, 1962), 65-83.
12. Li Ch'ih, *Te-yü-chai hua-p'u* (*Wang Shih shu-hua yüan* ed.); tr. A. C. Soper, "A Northern Sung Descriptive Catalogue of Paintings," *JASOS* 59, 1 (January-March 1949) 23.
13. *LTMHC* I, 16; Acker I, 153.
14. Quoted in Chang Yen-yüan, *Fa-shu yao-lu* (*T'z'ung-shu chi-ch'eng* ed.) IV, 67; tr. James F. Cahill, "Confucian Elements in the Theory of Painting," in Arthur Wright, ed., *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford, 1960), 127.
15. *LTMHC* X, 120; tr. Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), 21.
16. *LTMHC* X, 114; Acker II, 258.

CHAPTER III

1. For a full discussion of the *Ming-hua chi* and the texts Chang Yen-yüan makes use of, see Kenyū Dōtani, "Study of the *Li Tai Ming Hua Chi*," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 90 (June 1939). Dōtani notes that the earliest known ed. is of the late Ming period. See also: Yü Shao-sung, *Shu-hua shu-lu chieh-i* (Peking, 1932); Imamura Ryōichi, "On Some Lost Books on Painting in Ancient China," *Kokka* 554 (January 1937); Nakamura Shigao, *Chigoku garen no tenki* (Kyōtō, 1935); and Harada Bizan, *Shina gagaku-sho kaidai* (Tōkyō, 1938).
2. This work has not been translated.
3. In Chang Yen-yüan, *Fa-shu yao-lu* IV; tr. Acker I, 84-85 (see Note on Sources).
4. *LTMHC* X, 121.
5. *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*, *Cheng-chung shu-chü* ed. (Taipei, 1973), 1; tr. Vincent Yu-chung Shih, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (New York, 1959), 8-9.
6. *LTMHC* I, 1; Acker I, 64.
7. *LTMHC* I, 15; Acker I, 149.
8. "However easy it may be to make a close copy," wrote Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang, "it is difficult to transmit the spirit. . . . When ordinary people [make faithful copies] it's just like making tracings. How

- thus can they transmit anything to posterity?" Modified tr. from O. Sirén, *Chinese Painting V* (1958), 16.
9. *LTMHC* I, 21-22; Acker I, 177 and passim.
 10. *LTMHC* I, 14; Acker I, 181-183.
 11. Quoted in Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), 548.
 12. *TGMHL* 1b; Soper, tr. "T'ang ch'ao nung-hua lu," 207.
 13. See *Fa-shu yao-lu* III, 44-45, and S. Shimada, "Concerning the I-p'in Style of Painting," tr. Cahill, *Oriental Art*, u.s., 7 (1961) 66.
 14. See Bruno Belpaire, *T'ang kien wen tse: Florilège de la littérature des T'ang I* (Paris, 1957), 68-78. I am grateful to Professor James Liu for showing me Pauline Yu's study, "Sou-k'ung Tu's *Shih p'in*: Poetic Theory in Poetic Form," a research paper written for him at Stanford University in June 1974. I have also consulted Belpaire's somewhat more metaphysical translation, and an unpublished conference paper by Gunther Debon: "Links between the Theories of Literature, Calligraphy, and Painting." See also Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, "The Twenty-four Modes of Poetry," *Chinese Literature*, July 1963, 65-77.
 15. Pauline Yu, *op. cit.*
 16. The rendering of this line in Pauline Yu's tr. (*op. cit.*) was suggested by Professor Liu.
 17. Pauline Yu, *op. cit.*, 17.
 18. Gunther Debon, *op. cit.*, 17.
 19. Arthur Waley, *The Way and Its Power* (London, 1949), 193.
 20. In *Wen-hsüan*, ch. 11; tr. Debon, *op. cit.*, 17. Burton Watson translates these lines: "Spreading doctrines of what is 'beyond symbol,' Expounding texts on what is 'without origination,'" in *Chinese Rhyne-Prose* (New York and London, 1971), 85.
 21. "Mo-chieh has soared above the images of this world / like an immortal crane released from the cage," Su Shih, *Collected Poems (Sou-p'u ts'ung-k'an ed.)* 1, 2, 10a-b. Quoted in Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting*, 29.
 22. *LTMHC* I, 15; Acker I, 148-149.
 23. Debon, *op. cit.*, 18.
 24. Belpaire, *op. cit.*, 66.
 25. Shih, *op. cit.*
 26. *Op. cit.*, 13.
 27. *The Chinese Literati on Painting*, 3.
 28. For Tu Fu's poem on Li Tsun-shih's screen of pine trees, see *Tu shih ching ch'uan* (Shanghai, 1962) I, 187. See also T'eng Ku, "Chinesische Malerkunsttheorie in der T'ang- und Sungzeit," *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, n.f. 10.6 (1934), 237.
 29. What Tu Fu wrote was that Han Kan emphasised the flesh rather than the bones. The modern critic Hsü Fu-kuan has pointed out that that was not really meant as disparagement. See Hsü's *Chung-kuo i-shih ching-shen* (Taichung, 1966), 262.
 30. *Tu shih ching-ch'uan* I, 112-113. For a German rendering see E. von Zach, *Tu Fu's Gedichte* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952) I, 57-59.
 31. *Ku Hua-yang chi* II, 11a. For Ku K'uang as a landscape painter, see Chapter V.
 32. Translated by A. C. Soper, in *Artibus Asiae* 29 (1967) 4, 340. In this important article, Soper discusses three poems composed under the direction of the Emperor Saga (r. 810-823) about wall-paintings in the Chinese style. The poems too are in the Chinese manner, and Soper cites a number of Chinese examples for comparison, including Li Po's long and extravagantly phrased poem on the otherwise almost unknown southern amateur and connoisseur Chao Yen.
 33. *Po Hsiang-shan chi* (Hong Kong, n.d.), 187.
 34. *Tu shih ching-ch'uan* I, 44-51. For a note on Yen Wu, see David Hawkes, *A Little Primer of Tu Fu* (Oxford, 1967), 114.
 35. *Tu shih ching-ch'uan*, 545-546. See also E. von Zach tr., *op. cit.* I, 408.
 36. *Han Ch'ang-li ch'uan-chi* (Shanghai, 1935), 49. See also E. von Zach, *Han Yu's Poetische Werke* (Cambridge, 1952), 69-71.
 37. Reprints in *Hsin-chiao T'ang Sung shih chü-yao* (Taipei, 1969) II, 839.
 38. *T'ai-ch'eng*, in *Ibid.*, 840; tr. Witter Byner, *The Jade Mountain* (New York, 1964), 168.
 39. The name of the painter is unknown. See *Chang Chi shih chi* (Shanghai, 1958), 52.
 40. The poem, "Chiu-i-shan t'u" is a description of the scenery rather than of the painting. See *Ch'ü-ting ch'uan T'ang wen* VIII, 4904-4905.
 41. *Li I-shan shih hsüan*, (Hong Kong, n.d.), 161-162; tr. James J. Y. Liu, *The Poetry of Li Shang-yün* (Chicago, 1969), 121-123.
 42. *Li Chang-chi ko shih*, 106; tr. J. D. Frodsham, *op. cit.*, 134.

43. William Hung has: "With thousands of volumes worn by reading, whenever I took a pen, my thoughts were inspired"; *Tu Fu, China's Greatest Poet* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952) 1, 56.
44. See Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting*, 1.

CHAPTER IV

1. Mo Shih-lung, *Hua-shuo*, reprinted in *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien*, here abbreviated CKHLLP (Peking, 1957) II, 714; tr. Sirén, *Chinese Painting V* (1958), 14. For a critical comment, see Wai-kam Ho, "Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's New Orthodoxy and the Southern School Theory," in Christian F. Murck ed., *Artists and Traditions: A Colloquium on Chinese Art* (Princeton, 1976). Fu Shen has conclusively shown that the *Hua-shuo* is a compilation of paragraphs taken from the writings of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang; see his article, "A Study of the Authorship of the 'Hua-shuo': A Summary," in *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Chinese Painting* (Taipei, 1972), 85-141.
2. CKHLLP II, 770.
3. Or *P'u-shan hua-shu*. CKHLLP I, 223. Compare Sirén, *op. cit.*, 173.
4. *Ch'ing-hui hua-pa*, quoted in *Hua-hsieh hsin-yin IV*. Compare Sirén, *op. cit.*, 174.
5. *Chieh-chou hsieh-hua p'ien*. CKHLLP II, 865. Compare Lin Yü-t'ang, *The Chinese Theory of Art* (London, 1965), 187-189, sect. 9 on schools and styles: "The climate differs with geography and so do people. In the south, the landscape is of the soft, peaceful, undulating type, and the men who absorb the best there are kind and refined, while the unbalanced ones tend to become flippant and superficial. In the north, the topography is rugged, and the best of the men there are straightforward and honest, while the unbalanced ones are apt to be tough and rowdy. This is all natural. In painting, this difference in temperament comes out as the Northern and Southern Schools. Neither school is necessarily better than the other, but inside each school there are the orthodox and the unbalanced types. Their merit as painters must depend necessarily upon their individual culture." Shen Tsung-ch'ien goes on to classify painters. South: Wang Wei, Tung Yüan, Chü-jan, the two Mi, Ni Tsan, Huang Kuang-wang, Wang Meng, Tung Ch'i-ch'ang. North: the two Li, Kuo Hsi, Ma Yüan, Liu Sung-nien, Chao Po-chü, Li T'ang, Tai Chin, and Chou Ch'en. The following he says are "unclassified," neither necessarily of north or south: Ching Hao, Kuan Tung, Li Ch'eng, Fan K'uan, Wu Chen (!), Shen Chou, and Wen Cheng-ming.
6. See Nelson Wu, "Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636): Apathy in Government and Fervor in Art," in Arthur Wright and Denis Twitchett eds., *Confucian Personalities* (Stanford, 1962), 260-293.
7. He painted green maples on a screen in the Ch'ien-fu Ssu in Ch'ang-an, and Chang Yen-yüan speaks of pictures coloured by assistants under his direction.
8. For a full account of Chang Tsao see Chapter V.
9. For a full discussion of the expressionists in T'ang painting see S. Shimada, "Concerning the I-p' in Style of Painting," *Oriental Art*, n.s., 6, 2 (1961) 3-11; 7, 3 (1962), 3-10; 10, 1 (1964), 3-10; tr. James Cahill. Shimada covers many aspects of the evolution of brush technique in the T'ang Dynasty that have direct bearing on the subject of this book, but he does not touch on their regional connotations.
10. The evidence as to his place of origin is conflicting. *T'ang ch'ien hua-chia jen-ming ts'u-nien* (Peking, 1961), 14, says that he came from Po-hai, Shan-tung, citing *LTMHC* as its authority, but his brief biography in chap. 8 simply says that he was active under the (Northern) Ch'i, Chou, and Sui (p. 98). The entry on Tung Po-jen says that at the beginning of the Sui, Chan came to the court from "Chiang-nan," and that both made their homes to the "East of the River"—i.e., between the Yellow River and the coast. *I-chou ming-hua lu* (HSTS ed.), 28, under P'u Yen-ch'ang, speaks of lion paintings by Chan in a temple in Nanking, but it also refers to him wrongly as an artist of the (Liu) Sung period.
11. Nothing known of his origins. *LTMCH IX*, 108, calls him "an expert landscapist, extremely good at rendering the awesomeness of peaks and ranges" (Soper tr.).
12. Biographies in *Hsin T'ang shu*, Commercial Press ed. (Shanghai, 1936), c., 7-8.
13. A northerner by inference.
14. Members of the imperial family. Biographies in *Chün T'ang-shu*, Commercial Press ed. (Shanghai, 1936) LX, and *Hsin T'ang-shu LXXXVII*.

15. Active in the capital and in Shen-chou (Hsin-yang, Honan) in the reign of the Empress Wu; *LTMHC* IX, 113. Shimada says that he was a follower of Chang Tsao ("The I-p'in" [1961], 9), but that would have been impossible, as Chang Tsao lived half a century later. See 29, below.
16. Died 764. Biography in *Hsin T'ang-shu*, CCII, II/See also *LTMHC* IX, 114.
17. With Wang Wei, one of the "Friends of Poetry, Wine and Painting"; *LTMHC* X, 117.
18. Brief note in *LTMHC* X, 117.
19. Born 723, d. 787; member of the Council of State in the reign of Te-tsung (780-805). A native of Ch'ang-an and relative of Han Kan. Biography in *Hsin T'ang-shu* CXCVI, 9. See also *TCMHL* 8a-b and *LTMHC* X, 123.
20. Lived for a time in Chengtu, where Tu Fu met him in 760. *TCMHL* 7a.
21. Active under Su Tsung (r.756-763), and a friend of Yen Chen-ch'ing (709-785) when the latter was magistrate of Wu-hsing; *LTMHC* X, 124, *TCMHL* 30b.
22. *Hsian-ho lun-p'u* (here abbreviated *HHHP*) XIII, 151, says his origins are unknown, but he was probably a southerner. Chiefly known for his cattle and marsh scenes with water buffaloes.
23. Had an official career including governorship of Lien-chou in Kwangtung in the 780-784 era, and must have spent at least some years in Ch'ang-an. But his origins are unknown. Chu Ching-hsian compares him with Chang Tsao (*TCMHL* 11a), but Chang Yen-yüan (*LTMHC* X, 121) has a much lower opinion of him.
24. Circa 750-825. Friend of Po Chü-i in Hangchow in 823-824. *LTMHC* X, 124. Compare Arthur Waley, *The Life and Times of Po Chü-i* (London, 1949) 149.
25. Biography in *Chiu T'ang-shu*, CCCLVII. Member of Council of State in the 785-805 era. Later exiled to Hainan Island; *TCMHL* 7b-8a.
26. These three seem to have belonged to three generations who formed a family school and lived on Mount T'ien-t'ai in Kiangsu; *LTMHC* X, 125. See Shimada, *op. cit.*, 8.
27. *LTMHC* X, 125, says he modelled himself on Hsiang Jung, having first learned to use the brush from Cheng Ch'ien when he was in T'ai-chou (Chekiang). His origins are unknown, but there is no reason to think he was not a southerner.
28. Mr. Ku was an action painter from Wu-hsing active in the 766-780 era. *LTMHC* X, 122, lists a Ku K'uang, an unconventional poet and official from Wu-hsing who after holding several official posts was dismissed and exiled; he lived his last years on Mao-shan. It is not known whether they were the same man. Compare Shimada, *op. cit.*, 6.
29. Nothing is known of his origins. Chu writes as if he knew something of his personal life, which suggests that he was probably a southerner; but this is not conclusive, as Chang spent some years in the north.
30. Lived in Wu-hsing, first half of ninth century, a pupil of another monk painter, Tao-fen. Chang Yen-yüan met him and saw his landscape wall-paintings; *LTMHC* I, 19.
31. *TCMHL* 9a-b. Of a northern family but born in Yüeh-chou (Chekiang), where Chou Fang found him and took him as his pupil. Most of his career was spent in the capital, however. His dates appear to be 804-863. His tomb tablet is in the Shaanxi Provincial Museum. See Chin Wei-no, in *W'en H'u* 1963, 4, 39-43.
32. Went to Szechwan in the 885-888 era. Details of his life and work in Kuo Jo-hsi, *T'ien-hua chien-nen chih*, tr. A. C. Soper, 24; and *I-chou ming-hua lu* (HSTS ed.) I, 1.
33. Mid-eighth century. *LTMHC* X, 120, calls him a man of central Shu; *TCMHL* says he made his home in western Shu. A friend of Tu Fu in Chengtu in 760.
34. Taoist, late T'ang. Compare *I-chou ming-hua lu* I, 6-7. See also *TCMHL* I (Soper, tr., 25 and n. 251).
35. Went to Shu in the 881-885 era. *I-chou ming-hua lu* III, 37. See also *T'ien-hua chien-nen chih* (here abbreviated *THCNC*) I (Soper, tr., 24-25).
36. Chiefly a figure painter, but also painted bamboo. Went to Shu in the 860-874 era; *THCNC* II (Soper, tr., 24); *I-chou ming-hua lu* I, 11.
37. Went to Szechwan in the 901-904 era. Teacher of Huang Ch'uan. *I-chou ming-hua lu* II, 18-19; *THCNC* I (Soper, tr., 20-21).
38. See n. 30 above.
39. The same division is not so apparent among leading literary figures of the T'ang Dynasty. Of the 101 literati included in the "Garden of Letters" section of the *Chin T'ang-shu* (*Old T'ang History*) (completed in 945), 42 came from the northeast

(Honan-Hopei-Shantung), 25 from the southeast (Kiangsu-Chekiang-Anhui), 23 from the northwest (Shansi-Shensi-Kansu), and 10 from west-central China (Hupoh-Szechwan); moreover, the distribution, unlike that of the painters, does not seem to have changed significantly in the course of the dynasty. I can find no reason for this difference. See Hans H. Frankel, "T'ang Literati: A Composite Biography," in Arthur Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Confucian Personalities* (Stanford, 1962), 67.

CHAPTER V

1. *LTMHC* VIII, 96; Acker II, 190-191.
2. *LTMHC* VIII, 98; Acker II, 195-196.
3. *LTMHC* I, 16; Acker I, 155-156.
4. It is reproduced in *Chinese Art Treasures* (Geneva, 1961), pl. 11.
5. Mi Fu, *Hua-shih* (Mei-shu ts'ung-shu ed.), 6a. See also Nicole Vandier-Nicolas, *Le Houa-che de Mi Fou (1051-1107)* (Paris, 1960), 44. Mi Fu notes that the painting was formerly in the imperial library of the Southern T'ang.
6. T'ang Hou, *Hua chien* (Peking, 1959), 4-5.
7. See A. C. Soper, *Kuo Jo-hsi's Experiences*, 9.
8. Illustrated in *Chung-kuo ming-lua sau-pai ching* (Three Hundred Masterpieces of Chinese Painting in the Palace Museum) (Taipei, 1959) vol. 1.
9. These scrolls are not recorded in the *Hsian-ho lun-p'ien*. The source of the story is Teng Ch'un in the *Hua chi* (preface 1167) chap. 10. Teng relates that when Hui-tung acquired them the Conveyance by Water was missing, but that it later turned up in the collection of an old Loyang family and was presented to the throne.
10. *LTMHC* VIII, 99-100; Acker II, 200.
11. See Chapter VI, section on architecture.
12. *LTMHC* II, 20; Acker II, 164.
13. *LTMHC* VIII, 98. Chin Jih-ti (d. 86 B.C.) and Chang An-shih (d. 68 B.C.) were two high officials of the reign of Han Chao-ti (87-73 B.C.) and Hsian-ti (73-48 B.C.).
14. See *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China*, 122-124.
15. A well-known later version of a picture that may go back to Li Ch'eng is the Reading the Tablet scroll in the Abe Collection, illustrated in Siren, *Chinese Painting III* (1956), pl. 149.
16. *LTMHC* VIII, 97.
17. *LTMHC* II, 20.
18. *LTMHC* VIII, 99. Chang is here quoting from Li Su-ch'en; tr. Acker II, 199.
19. Yet he quotes the monk Ts'ung as saying that in him "the Six Elements are all complete, and he has Character-spirit [ku-ch'i] to a high degree. The style of [the region] East of the Mountains [i.e., region east of Hua-shan] derives from him." This latter rather enigmatic remark should probably be taken as referring to the wall-painting of figure subjects, which seems to have been his chief occupation, rather than to a local style of landscape painting, *LTMHC* VIII, 100; Acker II, 202.
20. *LTMHC* IX, 103-104.
21. T'uan Ch'eng-shih (d. 863), *Ssu-t'a chi* (Peking, 1964) I, 8.
22. Reprinted in *Tu shih ching-ch'uan* (Shanghai, 1962) I, 157. As the expert on building, Yen Li-te was no doubt a competent painter of architecture.
23. *LTMHC* IX, 101.
24. Mentioned by Kuo Jo-hsi, *T'u-lua chien-nen chih* VI, 82.
25. *Hua shih*, 2b. See also N. Vandier-Nicolas, *Le Houa-che de Mi Fou*, 19-20 and 20 n. 1.
26. *LTMHC* IX, 106.
27. *TCMHL* 9a; Soper, *op. cit.*, 222; Chu puts him in the excellent grade, middle class.
28. See my "Notes on Early Chinese Screen Painting," *Artibus Asiae* 27 (1966) 239-254.
29. *LTMHC* IX, 108.
30. *Ibid.*, 45.
31. *Ibid.*, 3.
32. He has biographies in the *Chiu T'ang-shu*, 60 (appended to the biography of Shu-liang, Premier of Ch'ang-p'ing, in the section on the imperial house), and in *Hsin T'ang-shu*, 78. See also *LTMHC* IX, 11, and *TCMHL* 4b-5a.
33. *TCMHL* 4b-5a and *LTMHC* IX, 111.
34. *THCWC* III, 37; Soper, *op. cit.*, 46, *op. cit.*, 46.
35. *Hua-shih ts'ung-shu* (HSTS ed.) X, 100.
36. *Hua-shih*, 15b; tr. Vandier-Nicolas, 96.
37. *HSTS* ed. II, 19.
38. *Sou hao*. These are the four scholars who refused to emerge from retirement at the founding of the Han Dynasty.
39. *LTMHC* III, 29; Acker I, 269.

40. Illustrated in Sirén, *Chinese Painting* III, 81. Presumably this refers to the river in Chekiang, although there is no record that Li Chao-tao was ever in the southeast.
41. Tr. William A. Roulston, *Oriental Art*, n.s., 6, 4 (Winter 1960), 153.
42. *TCMHL* 1b-2a; Soper, *op. cit.*, 209. The *Mei-shu ts'ung-shu* ed. says this incident took place in the T'ien-pao era (742-756).
43. *THCWC* V, 69-70. Soper, *op. cit.*, 76.
44. *Hua chieu, Chung-kuo hua-hui ts'ung-shu* ed. (Peking, 1959), 13.
45. *Chun-p'u, Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng* ed. (Shanghai, 1936), 2.
46. *TCMHL* 2a-b; Soper, *op. cit.*, 210.
47. *LTMHC* I, 16; Acker I, 156-157. The phrase Acker translates as "occasionally," *wang wang*, could as well mean "often" or "formerly."
48. *Tu shih ching-ch'uan* (Peking, 1962) I, 26-28; tr. William Hung, *Tu Fu: China's Greatest Poet* I, 32-33.
49. *LTMHC* III, 52. Acker I, 361.
50. See *Pi fa chi*, in *Chung-kuo hua-hui lei-p'ien* (Peking, 1957) I, 608. This comment was repeated by Kuo Jo-hsi.
51. There is some confusion about his name in the texts. The *Ming-hua chi* entry (chap. 9, 114) begins: "Lu Hung i ming Hao-jan" (Lu Hung, one of whose names was Hao-jan). In the *Chiu T'ang-shu* CXLIH, 3-4 and some later texts his name has become Lu Hung-i.
52. *Hsiao-ho hua-p'u* (HHHP) X, 101.
53. *Hua shih*, 68b. See Vaudier-Nicolas, *op. cit.*, 113.
54. *Hua chieu*, 18. *Chieu-chi* is impossible to translate literally. It means something that faithfully preserves or transmits the original, rather than the original itself.
55. William Hung, *op. cit.*, 63.
56. *Tu shih ching-ch'uan* I, 89; tr. William Hung, *op. cit.*, 82.
57. *LTMHC* IX, 114; Acker II, 258-259.
58. The material about Wang Wei is taken from a number of sources: *LTMHC* X, 117; Acker II, 265-268; *TCMHL* 6b-7a; Soper, *op. cit.*, 218-219; his biographies in the *T'ang-shu*, chap. 118, and *Hsin T'ang-shu*, chap. 145; and the study of his life and work reprinted in *Chung-kuo uing-hua-chia ts'ung-shu* (Hong Kong, 1970), 221-257. There is some doubt as to when he was born and when he died. The *T'ang-shu* biography says that he died in 759, but the *Hsin T'ang-shu* says 758, at the (Chinese) age of sixty-one. However, from a remark in Wang's collected poems referring to his younger brother Wang Chiu, it would seem that he was born in 701 and died in 761. See B. W. Robinson, *Poems of Wang Wei*, 13-16.
59. *THCWC* V, 73; Soper, *op. cit.*, 80. See also below on Chang Tsao.
60. Cyril Birch, ed., *Anthology of Chinese Literature* (New York, 1965), 235.
61. Quoted in *Chung-kuo hua-hui lei-p'ien* I, 629.
62. *An Introduction to the Study of Chinese Painting*, 144-145.
63. In *Ku-chiu shih-hsuan*; tr. William A. Roulston in *Oriental Art*, n.s., 2, 4 (Winter 1956), 56.
64. Quoted by Chang Yen-yüan in *LTMHC* IX, 14; Acker II, 265.
65. *Hsin T'ang-shu*, CXLV.
66. Translated by Arthur Waley; quoted in Cyril Birch, *Anthology*, 237.
67. Translated by B. W. Robinson, *op. cit.*, 31.
68. In the lost *Hua-tsun*, quoted in a nineteenth-century work, *T'ang hua ching ch'eng fang k'ao*. I have not been able to consult this work.
69. *Hua shih*, 3a; tr. Vaudier-Nicolas, *op. cit.*, 22-23.
70. *HHHP* X, 102.
71. See Vaudier-Nicolas, *op. cit.*, 22 n. 3. John Ferguson lists a number of later versions attributed to Kuo Chung-shu in *Li-tai chu-hu hua-mu* (Nanking, 1934), 290a-291a. See also B. Laufer, "A Landscape of Wang Wei," *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift* I (1912), 22-55, and Ferguson, *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift* III (1914). Parts of the rubbings from engravings are also reproduced in Sirén, *Chinese Painting* III, pl. 91. For a study of the poems, see Herbert Francke, "Wang-ch'uan chi," *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, n.f., 13 (1937) 16-23.
72. Quoted in *Hua-hsüeh hsün-yün* (1878) III, 18b; tr. Sirén, *op. cit.*, I, 129.
73. *Hua-yen, Hua-hsüeh hsün-yün* III, 16b. Sirén, *op. cit.*, I, 128.
74. Sirén, *op. cit.*, I, 130.
75. Based, according to Sirén, on the stone engravings. Reproduced in *Asiatic Art in the Seattle Art Museum* (Tokyo, 1973), 191, no. 154.
76. William Cohn, *Chinese Painting* (London, 1948), 51, fig. 17. Formerly attributed to Chao Meng-fu.

77. This painting, to my knowledge, has not been reproduced.
78. *HHHP* X, 103-104.
79. See Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang, *Hua-yen*, *op. cit.*, 18a, and Sirén, *op. cit.*, I, 131. In a recent study of the Honolulu and Ogawa versions, Wen Fong concludes that, "in spite of certain weaknesses of the drawing, which, I suggest, resulted from copying, the rock and tree forms of the Ogawa scroll compare well with authentic T'ang landscape forms." He considers that the Honolulu scroll is a pastiche based on a combination of the Ogawa scroll and *Feeling of Snow on the River Bank* in the Palace Museum, Taipei. See "Rivers and Mountains after Snow (*Chiang-shan hsiueh-chi*) attributed to Wang Wei (A.D. 699-759)" *Archives of Asian Art* 30 (1976-1977), 6-33.
80. *Chigoku kaigashii kenkyū: sanzūga-ron* (Tōkyō, 1962).
81. *LTMHC* X, 117; Acker II, 268-269. Not mentioned by Chu Ching-hsüan.
82. Chia Su-tao was the notorious minister to Li-tsung (1225-1264). Some of the paintings in his collection are listed in the *Yüeh-sheng so-tsang shu-hua p'ieh-hu*, in *Mei-shu ts'ung-shu* XX, 4/10.
83. *LTMHC* X, 120; Acker II, 278-279. Brief reference in *TCMHL* 11a; Soper, *op. cit.*, 226.
84. *HHHP* X, 105.
85. *Hua-shih*, 17a.
86. Chang Yen-yüan in the *LTMHC* X, 117, said that he was skilled in landscape painting, yet found his style rather rough and sketchy. Chu Ching-hsüan places him in the top class of his middle (*min*, marvellous) grade, putting Li Su-hsün, Chang Tsao, and Hsiieh Ch'ü in his *shen* (divine) class above him. See *TCMHL* 6b-7a.
87. Biographical details from *TCMHL* 5b and *LTMHC* X, 121.
88. This event is not referred to by Chu Ching-hsüan or Chang Yen-yüan: perhaps they thought it reflected no credit on the persons concerned, although Wang Wei and Cheng Ch'ien at least are said to have made strenuous efforts to avoid having to collaborate. It is mentioned in Li Fang's encyclopaedic miscellany *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi* (978), chap. 122, where the author says that his source is the *Ming-huang tsa-hu*, Miscellaneous Records of the Reign of Ming-huang (835). I have been unable to check this work. The story is repeated in Kuo Jo-hsi's compendium of c. 1070. See A. C. Soper, *Kuo Jo-hsi's Experiences*, 80 and n. 631.
89. See A. C. Soper, "T'ang Ch'ao Ming Hua Lu," 216 n. 67.
90. See A. C. Soper, *Kuo Jo-hsi's Experiences*, 114 n. 37.
91. Reprinted in *Chung-kuo hua-hu lei-p'ien* I, 20-21.
92. *P'o Hsiang-shan chi* (Peking, 1954), chap. 25, 12.
93. Yüan Chen, "Hua sung shih" (Painting of a Pine Tree), reprinted in *Chung-kuo hua-hu lei-p'ien* I, 26.
94. For a discussion of the meaning of *p'o-mo*, see pp. 110.
95. Acker II, 283.
96. The lady may perhaps be excused, for in the years after the An Lu-shan Rebellion silk was traded in huge quantities with the Uighurs in exchange for horses, and was in very short supply on the home market. See Margaret Tudor Smith, *Li Ho: A Scholar-Official of the Yüan-ho Period (806-821)* (Adelaide, 1967), 365-368.
97. The purple-tipped brush was made from the firm, sharp, deep purple hairs of a hare, much used for fine work. The poet Po Chü-i has a poem about it which Acker quotes (I, 157).
98. Soper, "T'ang Ch'ao Ming Hua Lu," 216.
99. *LTMHC* III, 38, 43, and *TCMHL* 5b.
100. See Soper, *Kuo Jo-hsi's Experiences*, 81.
101. *Hua shih* 13b-14a.
102. *Hsian-ho hua-p'u* X, 106.
103. *Hua chien* 16.
104. In the *Pi-fa chi* I, 607.
105. See John Ferguson, *Li-tai chu-hu hua-mu* III, 278-279.
106. *LTMHC* X, 122.
107. Translated by Acker (II, 287).
108. Wu Yüan-heng, *Lui Wen-pu shih chi* (*Ku-chin t'ün-shu chi-ch'eng* ed.), preface.
109. *Lin Shang shih chi*. See also S. Shimada, "Concerning the 1-p'in Style of Painting"; tr. Cahill, *Oriental Art*, n.s., 7, 2 (1961), 72.
110. *LTMHC* X, 124; Acker II, 297-298. *TCMHL* 13b; Soper, *op. cit.*, 228-229. His biography is to be found in the Recluses section of the *T'ang-shu* chap. 196. See also Shimada, *op. cit.*
111. *LTMHC* X, 120; Acker II, 277. *TCMHL* 6b; Soper, *op. cit.*, 218.

112. TCMHL 7b-8a; Soper, *op. cit.*, 220; LTMHC X, 120. His biography is in *Chin T'ung-shu* LXVIII, 6-11, and *Hsin T'ang-shu* CXLV, 7-10.
113. Giles (Biographical Dictionary, no. 2417) gives the date of his death as 781, which is certainly wrong, as his appointment to the Council of State took place in the 785-805 era.
114. TCMHL 7b-8a; Soper, *op. cit.*, 220. Soper suggests that the minister in question was the great and incorruptible Lu I, who was killed for defying An Lu-shan. See also LTMHC X, 120; Acker II, 279-280.
115. LTMHC X, 120; Acker II, 279.
116. LTMHC X, 122; Acker II, 286.
117. *Feng-shih wen-chien hu* (T'ung-shu chi-ch'eng ed., 1936), 66-67. A somewhat abbreviated rendering of this passage is given by Shimada in pt. 1 of his article on the *I-p'in*, *op. cit.*, 66.
118. LTMHC X, 125; Acker II 229-302.
119. TCMHL 30a; Soper, *op. cit.*, 228.
120. HHHF X, 104.
121. *Ku Hua-yang chi* (1931 repr. of T'ung-chih ed., 1931) II, 11a.
122. LTMHC X, 124-125; Acker II, 298-299.
123. *Ku Hua-yang chi* 11b. Acker suggests that the name Tao-fen, which he notes does not appear in *Hua-chia jen-ming ta t'zu-t'ien*, might be a mistake on Chang Yen-yüan's part for Tao-chih, a monk painter listed in that work and mentioned by Chu Ching-hsüan; but the verse by Ku K'uang quoted here suggests that this is not the case, and that these were indeed two different men, or that Chu's Tao-chih may be a mistake for Tao-fen.
124. LTMHC I, 17; Acker II, 158-159. For a comment on what Chang Yen-yüan might possibly have meant by "double stroke," see below, Chapter VII, in the discussion of the technique of the *Ingakyō* scrolls.
125. LTMHC X; Acker II, 298.
126. *Pi-fa chi*, 608; tr. Munakata, 15.
127. HHHF X, 104-105.
128. Fang Kan, *Hsüan-yang hsien-sheng chi* (Ku-chiu t'zu-shu chi-ch'eng ed.).
129. *Ibid.*, V; see Shimada, *op. cit.*
130. *Tu fu: China's Greatest Poet* I, 169-170.
131. TCMHL 7b; Soper, *op. cit.*, 219-220. Actually the text does not refer specifically to *folding* screens, but simply to a screen or screens (*p'ing-chang*); presumably Soper thought that as there were four seasons there must be four panels, and hence that the screen was a folding one.
132. LTMHC I, 17; Soper, *op. cit.*, 219 n. 81.
133. Quoted in *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-p'ien* I, 590.
134. TCMHL 82; Soper, *op. cit.*, 219.
135. LTMHC X, 121; Soper, *op. cit.*, 219 n. 79.
136. HHHF XIII, 150.
137. *Hua shih* 5a. Elsewhere in the text Mi Fu refers to a painting by Wei of a pine tree in the collection of "Chiang Yung-chung." Vandier-Nicolas thinks that is a slip, and that Mi Fu had only one painting in mind. See *Le Hwa-cho de Mi Fou* 37, para. 23, and 110, para. 119 and n. 3.
138. Huang Hsü-fu, *I-chou ming-hua lu* 11; also recorded by Kuo Jo-hsü in TCMHL; Soper, *op. cit.*, 25 and n. 251.
139. *I-chou* 6-7.
140. THCW II, 18; Soper, *op. cit.*, 24-25.
141. *I-chou* 37 notes that it captured something of the scenery of Wu (Chekiang).
142. *I-chou* 18.
143. Soper, *op. cit.*, 147 n. 375.
144. THCW II; Soper, *op. cit.*, 24.
145. *I-chou* 1.
146. Quoted in *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-p'ien* I, 628. See also Sirén, *Chinese Painting* I, 162.
147. See Ch'eng Mung-shih, "Lun Sun Wei Kao-i t'zu ku-shih nai ch'ü yü Ku K'ai-chih hua feng ti kuan-hsi" (Discussion of Sun Wei's Kao-i t'zu and its Connection with the Style of Ku K'ai-chih), *Wen Wen* 1965.8, 15.

CHAPTER VI

1. Ernst Boerschmann, *Die Bankans und Religiöse Kultur der Chinesen* (Berlin, 1914) I, 175.
2. Li Te-yü, *P'ing-ch'uan ts'ao-shu chi* (T'ung-shu chi-ch'eng ed., no. 1859) 232; tr. Bruno Belpaire, *T'ang Kien Wen Tse: Florilège de la littérature des Tang I* (Paris, 1957), 87-95.
3. *Han Ch'ang-h chi-nan-chi* (Shanghai, 1935), 119.
4. See Rolf Stein, "Jardins en miniature . . ." *Bulletin de l'école française d'Extrême-Orient* 42 (1942), 1-33.
5. See my *Birth of Landscape Painting in China*, 58-59.
6. See Su Ngo, *Tu-yang tsu-pien*, in *Pi-hui* 2, 6a. Stein, *op. cit.*, 41 n. 1.

7. All these examples are given by Rolf Stein, *op. cit.*
8. *LTMHC* III, 50-51; Acker I, 312, 319.
9. Rolf Stein, *op. cit.*
10. This, and the preceding quotation from Po Chü-i, are taken from Rolf Stein, *op. cit.*, 40-41 and 33.
11. *Chinese Art Treasures* (Geneva, 1961), 11. See also James Cahill, "Some Rocks in Chinese Painting," *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 26 (1962), fig. 6.
12. *LTMHC* I, 16; tr. Acker I, 156.
13. One such painting was in Hui-tsung's collection. Compare *Hsüan-ho hua p'u* (HHHP) X, 101.
14. *I-chou ming-hua* 18.
15. *I-chou ming-hua* 18, 21; tr. Soper, *THCWC* 147 n. 357.
16. *Chinese Art Treasures*, 20.
17. While a number of early paintings show people in gardens (e.g., R114-R119), none are pictures of gardens as such. It is not until the Yüan Dynasty that we encounter a painting simply of a garden. Whether such pictures existed before the Yüan it is now impossible to tell.
18. *Chu-lan hua-yang*. Quoted by Li Lin-ts'an; tr. John Hay, "Pine and Rock, Wintery Tree, Old Tree and Bamboo and Rock—The Development of a Theme," *National Palace Museum Bulletin* 4, 6 (1970) 8-11.
19. Translated by Burton Watson, *Cold Mountain* (New York, 1962) 111.
20. *Ch'üan T'ang-shih*, 3858; tr. A. C. Graham, *Poems of the Late T'ang* 74.
21. *LTMHC* IX, 110-111.
22. See Soper, *Kuo fo-hui's Experiences* 162 n. 444.
23. *LTMHC* I, 16.
24. See T. Haruyama, "Juka no bijin ron" (Discussion of the "Beauty beneath a Tree"), *Tōyō Bijutsu* 4 (1929), 65-85.
25. A. Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art* (Paris, 1917) 104.
26. See Ellen Johnston Laing, "Neo-Taoism and the 'Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove' in Chinese Painting," *Artibus Asiae* 36 (1974) 5-54.
27. Compare P'ei Hsiao-yüan, *Chen-kuan kuang-shu hua-shih* (*McI-shu ts'ung-shu* ed.) 10b.
28. *LTMHC* VIII, 99.
29. We can assume that this was an accurate rendering, as Yen Li-te, in the capacity of chief architect, supervised its construction; *LTMHC* IX, 103.
30. *LTMHC* IX, 107; tr. Soper, "T'ang Ch'ao Ming Hua Lu" 225 n. 110.
31. *Meng-ch'i pi-i'an* VIII. Quoted in Ts'ung Pai-hua, "Space-Consciousness in Chinese Painting," tr. Ernest J. Schwartz, *Sino-Austrian Cultural Journal* 1 (1949).
32. *Dunhuang Bihua* (Peking, 1959), pls. 103, 91, 66.
33. *Ibid.*, pls. 139, 151 and 152.
34. For example: *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China*, pls. 6, 6a, 20, 21, and 24.
35. *LTMHC* IX, 107.
36. HHHP X, 101.
37. Attributed to Chou Wen-chü, it is illustrated in *Chung-kuo hua* (1959), 11.
38. *TCMHL* 9a; tr. Soper, *op. cit.*, 223.
39. *LTMHC* IX, 113.
40. *LTMHC* X, 122, and *TCMHL* 9b.
41. Edward Schafer, *The Golden Peaches* 342 n. 38, notes that this title and a number of other T'ang works on geography are listed in the *T'ang-shu*, chaps. 57, 58.
42. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches*, 273.
43. See Sylvain Lévi, "Les Missions de Wang Hsüen-ts'c dans l'Inde," *Journal Asiatique* 15 (1900) 297-341, 401-468.
44. HHHP I, 11.
45. *THCWC* VI, 82.
46. *LTMHC* IX, 105; HHHP I, 9.
47. *LTMHC* III, 51.
48. HHHP V, 56.
49. *LTMHC* VIII, 97. Chang summed up Feng's landscapes as "never very refined and polished. His mountains and rivers, grasses and trees are graceful enough, and in (rendering) the carts and horses of the region north of the Great Wall he realised his intention, but the human figure was never his forte" (Acker II, 194). After the Chou Dynasty fell in 581, he earned his living as a professional painter.
50. *LTMHC* X, 124; Acker II, 295.
51. See above, Chapter I.
52. *LTMHC* III, 53. This is one of the wall-paintings that were transferred to the Kan-lu Suu, the only temple in Ch'ang-an that was spared in the destruction of 845. Chang does not say which temple it was taken from.
53. HHHP I, 18. Chao was appointed "in attendance" at the Han-lin Academy of Former Shu under

- Wang Chien. This painting is not mentioned in the section on him in the *I-chou t'ung-hua lu*.
54. For the story of Queen Vaidehi see Arthur Waley, *An Introduction to the Study of Chinese Painting* 128; the meditations are described in the *Ami-tayurdhyāna Sūtra* (Sacred Books of the East, Oxford 1894) XLIX, 161.
 55. *HHHP* X, 101.
 56. Chang Ch'ou, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua faue*, Ch'ih-pei ts'ao-t'ang ed. (1763), IV, 38a-38b.
 57. Although it was Sung Ti who first painted the Eight Views, the scenery of Hsiao and Hsiang had been an inspiration to poets and painters long before his time. Two of the *Nine Songs* of Ch'u are invocations to the Goddess of the Hsiang; Tsung Ping lived and painted in that region; the T'ang poets Tu Fu, Meng Ch'iao, and Li Po sang of its beauties; Wang Tai, a gentleman of Ming-huang's time, painted the scenery of the Hsiang in the manner of Li Su-hsün; the *Hsian-ho hua-p'u* attributed to Han Huang a *Meeting au Old Friend on the Hsiao and Hsiang*. Kuo Jo-hsü notes (*THCWC* II, 27) that in his time there was still in existence a set of paintings of the Eight Views by the tenth-century flower painter Huang Ch'ian; but there is no other record that all eight views were ever painted before the time of Sung Ti, and Kuo Jo-hsü may have been wrong.
 58. A useful volume, chiefly of copies, of these early tomb paintings is *Han T'ang pi-hua* (Peking, 1974).
 59. See *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China*, chap. 3.
 60. Under the Northern Sung, indeed, there seems to have been a revival of this kind of realistic genre painting by such masters as Kuo Chung-shu, Fan K'uan, and Kuan T'ung, perhaps reflecting the same concern with the close investigation of the real world as is expressed in early Neo-Confucianism.
 61. *LTMHC* X, 123.
 62. *Ibid.*
 63. *Chinese Art Treasures*, pls. 12, 13.
 64. *LTMHC* IX, 103.
 65. *Ibid.*, 111.
 66. *Ibid.*, 113.
 67. Translated by B. W. Robinson, *Poems of Wang Wei*, 31.
 68. *Chin T'ang-shu* CXL, 3.
 69. For the whole poem, see above, pp. 55, 58-59.
 70. But his bamboos were not as good as his landscapes; *TCMHL* 6b.
 71. *Ibid.* 13a-b.
 72. Arthur Waley, *The Life and Times of Po Chü-i*, 149.
 73. Translated by Acker II, 297.
 74. These lines from the same poem are quoted in *HHHP* XIV, 167; tr. Waley, *op. cit.*
 75. *LTMHC* X, 124.
 76. *Chin-p'u hsiaue-lu* (preface 1299). Commercial Press ed., 1936, 1.
 77. See article by Chin Wei-no in *Wen Wen* 1963.4, 39-43.
 78. *TCMHL* 9a, b; tr. Soper, *op. cit.*, 223. Ch'eng is not mentioned by Chang Yen-yün or Kuo Jo-hsü. Acker II, 288, says that Chu Ching-hsüan credits Lui Shang and Pien Luan with having done *Bamboos and Trees and Sparrows and Bamboo*, respectively; but in fact Chu does not mention bamboos in regard to either of these painters.
 79. *THCWC* II, 18; tr. Soper, *op. cit.*, 24.
 80. *I-chou t'ung-hua lu*, 1.
 81. Reproduced in *Three Hundred Masterpieces of Chinese Painting in the Palace Museum* (Taichung, 1959) I, pl. 1.
 82. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches*, 121, quoting Wang Jen-yü, *K'ai-yün t'ien-pao i-shih* (*T'ang-tai ts'ung-shu* ed., 1864) 3, 53b.
 83. Best known in the Ming ed. of Li Shih-chen (1596).
 84. See Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China* I, 255.
 85. *LTMHC* IX, 107; Acker II, 226.
 86. See above, Chapter V.
 87. The story is told in *LTMHC* IX, 114. For a fuller discussion of the relation between poetry, calligraphy, and painting, see my short book *The Three Perfections* (London, 1974).
 88. *TCMHL* 7a, 5b.
 89. See Chapter V, p. 77 and n. 128.
 90. *TCMHL* 9a; Soper, *op. cit.*, 223. It is not absolutely clear from the text that the Emperor actually wrote the poem on the screen; it simply says that the Emperor had (*yu*) a poem which runs...
 91. See William Hung, *Tu Fu: China's Greatest Poet*, 169.

92. See Tu Fu's "Sung shu chang-tzu ko," Song of a Screen of Pines. Tr. Erwin von Zach, *Tu Fu's Gedichte I* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), 73-75.

CHAPTER VII

1. But he is a bit inconsistent. In chap. 1, sect. 4, he has *Shang-ku* (high antiquity), which comes down to Ku K'ai-chih (d. 406) and Lu T'an-wei, who was active under Sung Ming Ti (465-472); *Chung-ku* (middle antiquity), the sixth and early seventh centuries; *Chiu-tai* (recent times), the era of Wu Tao-tzu and Wang Wei; and the present. In chap. 2, sect. 4, however, his high antiquity only comes down to the Three Kingdoms. Zürcher (*T'ung Pao* 51 [1964]) suggests that the fact that he goes no further back than Ku K'ai-chih indicates that for Chang painting had from the beginning been an aristocratic pursuit, done by men "robed and capped, and of noble descent, rare scholars and lofty-minded men" to use Chang's own words—something that could not be said of the painters of the Han Dynasty.
2. See T'eng Ku, "Chinesische Malkunsttheorie in der T'ang- und Sungzeit," *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, n.f., 10, 6 (1934) 17 n. 1.
3. T'eng Ku (*ibid.*) appears to accept Wang's division for T'ang painting as well.
4. See for instance, *Drumhuang Bihua* (Peking, 1959).
5. See Chang Ta-ch'ien (Chang Dai Chien), *T'ai-feng-t'ang lin miao Tun-huang pi-hua* (Chengtu, 1943).
6. The minor flower painter Yin Chung-juang, active in the time of the "Emperor" Wu (r. 690-705), was noted according to Chang Yen-yuan for "using ink as if it were the five colours," suggesting a boneless technique of delicately graded ink washes such as was sometimes used by later flower painters. On the basis of this one reference several scholars, cited below, have suggested that Yin was the precursor of the great eighth-century landscape painters in the *shui-mo* and *pi-mo* techniques. But as we shall see, these techniques were already beginning to appear in landscape painting before the eighth century. Compare Kobayashi Taichirō, *Chūgoku kaigashu ronkō* (Kyōto, 1947) 209; Hsü Fu-kuan, *Chung-kuo i-shu ch'ing-shen* (Taipei, 1966) 257, 222 n. 174; and Mary H. Fong, "The Technique of 'Chiaroscuro' in Chinese Painting from Han to T'ang," *Artibus Asiae* 38, 2/3 (1976) 91-126.
7. In his Ph. D. diss. "The Rise of Ink-Wash Landscape Painting in the T'ang Dynasty" (1965), Minakata Kiyohiko clings very closely, in building up his picture of T'ang landscape technique, to Chang Yen-yuan's dense-sparse dialectic. While it is true that, as Chang himself wrote, "without perceiving the distinction between the two styles one cannot discuss painting," I prefer a broader classification (my "painterly"), which embraces not only the sketchy technique of Chang Seng-yu but also the extremely rich brush and ink of Chang Tsao, which can by no stretch of the word be called "sparse."
8. The dating of these caves is uncertain. See A. von le Coq, *Die Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien VII* (Berlin, 1933). See also Mario Bussagli, *Paintings of Central Asia* (Geneva, 1963) 109, where this fragment is dated to the ninth-tenth centuries.
9. The story is in the *Fo-pen hsing-chi ching*. Takakusu and Watanabe, *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* III, Tōkyō, 1924, 705.
10. The suggestion was made by Arthur Waley, who referred to an account of the episode in the *Fo-pen hsing-chi ching*, an account of the Buddha's life that was popular at Tunhuang and is reprinted in Takakusu J. and Watanabe K., *op. cit.*, 704. See Waley's Preface in Gray and Vincent, *Buddhist Cave-Paintings at Tunhuang* (London, 1959), 13.
11. For the perils, see Arthur Waley, *Catalogue of Paintings Recovered from Tunhuang*, 4-5.
12. For a very good reproduction of this corner in colour, see Koyama Fujio et al., *Great Museums of the World XV* pl. 150.
13. The 1-*te* tomb is fully described in *Wen Wu* 1972.7, 26-31, while the themes of the wall-paintings are discussed in *Kaogu* 1973.6, 381-393. The copies of the wall-paintings from which my details are taken were published in *Chung-kuo Jen-min Kung-ho-kuo Han T'ang pi-hua tsan*, Exhibition of Han to T'ang Wall-Paintings from the People's Republic of China (Tōkyō, 1975); several of the details were photographed by James Cahill, to whom I am grateful for permission to publish them.
14. Akiyama (*Arts of China* II, pl. 46 and p. 216) considers that, like the scene in Cave 217 described above, this panel illustrates the parable of the conjured-up city; but the travellers are going

- away from it, or past it, and there is no suggestion here of the harrowing experiences and excitement of discovery that characterises the travellers in the panel of Cave 217.
15. This painting is reproduced and discussed in *Wen-ku ching-lua* no. 1 (Peking, 1959).
 16. See my *Birth of Landscape Painting in China*, 93-101.
 17. A careful examination of this picture in Peking in October 1975 convinced me that it was indeed an early work, although I know of no other examples of the technique used to represent the ripples on the surface of the lake earlier than the Sung Dynasty, while the figures on the boat and standing on the foreshore are somewhat reminiscent of those in the Tung Yuan handscroll of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers. But since no other T'ang landscape handscrolls seem to have survived, it would be wrong on these grounds to relegate it to the tenth century or later.
 18. For a discussion of the subject matter of this painting, see Li Lin-tan, "A Study of the Masterpiece T'ang Ming-luang's Journey to Shu," *Art Orientalis* 4 (1961) 315-321. Max Locher considers it to be a late T'ang work, but adds: "While there is no consensus of opinion regarding the date of *Ming-luang's Journey to Shu*, the ancientness of its design cannot be questioned." He refers to the two versions, "and a third one attributed to Chao Po-chü (*Chung-kuo ming-lua* Vol. XXV, no. 3: *Plank-Road in the Clouds*), which derives from the left half of the composition," and suggests that the three "testify to the existence of a lost T'ang work of great importance." See his *Chinese Landscape Woodcuts* (Cambridge, Mass. 1968) 80 n. 2.
 19. Sir M. Aurel Stein, *Serindia* (Oxford, 1921) III, 281.
 20. Lionel Giles, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Manuscripts from Tun-huang in the British Museum* (London, 1957).
 21. The tomb was built for Chang Huai in 706. It was repurposed for the interment of his wife in 711, when all the walls beyond the fourth air shaft were repainted with themes suitable for a lady's tomb. The landscapes illustrated here, however, are all from the entrance shaft, and so date to 706. The tomb is fully reported in H'eu H'u 1972:7. Good enlarged details of the landscapes are reproduced in *Han T'ang pi-lua*, pls. 71-73, 78-80, 81.
 22. The information given here is taken from the exhaustive study of the technique of the biwa paintings in the Shōsōin Office ed., *Shōsōin no kage*, Paintings in the Shōsōin (Tōkyō, 1968).
 23. See *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China*, pl. 98.
 24. See my *Arts of China*, pl. 106.
 25. In his pioneer study "The Rise of Yamato-e," *Art Bulletin* 24, 4 (December 1942) 356 n. 12, Alexander Soper cited two biwa in the possession of the Emperor Nintsei (833-849) which had been given to a Japanese visitor to Ch'ang-an, Fujiwara no Sadatoshi, by the famous lutanist Liu Ni-liang, at a farewell banquet in 838. One of them was known as *Green Hills* from the fact that it was painted with a scene of green hills, verdant trees, and a bright moon. Soper suggested that one of the Shōsōin biwa (he was referring to Biwa C, pl. 52) "was copied after a similar Chinese original of the eighth century"; but it too could have been imported from China.
 26. Ch'en I-hsin, *Wang Wei shih-luian* (Peking, 1959); tr. G. W. Robinson, *Poems of Wang Wei*, 27.
 27. See Kuo Jo-lisü, *T'ang-lua chieh-ven chih* 6; tr. Soper, *Kuo Jo-lisü's Experience*, 103.
 28. But they are now far antedated by the Western Han maps found in 1974 in Tomb 3 at Ma-wang-tui, Changsha, which are reproduced and described in *W'u H'u* 1975:2, 35-43. For a thorough study of the Shōsōin maps, see Shōsōin Office, *Shōsōin no kage*, Paintings in the Shōsōin pls. 41-43.
 29. See Matsumoto Eiichi, "Notes on Illustrated Transcripts of the Inkyōyō Scripture," *Kokkai* 648, 649 (1944); and Dietrich Seckel, "Das Alteste Langrollenbild in Japan: Kako-Genzai-Inkyōyō," *Bulletin of Eastern Art* (Tōkyō) 1 (1943), 19-35, and E-makimono: *The Art of the Japanese Painted Hand-scroll*, tr. J. M. Brownjohn (London, 1959).
 30. Akiyama Terukazu, *The Pageant of Japanese Art I* (Tōkyō, 1952), 17-19.
 31. Is this perhaps the "double line" technique used, according to Chang Yen-yüan, by the T'ang painter Hsü Pao-jen? See above, Chapter V.
 32. Akiyama, *loc. cit.*
 33. For iconographic analysis of the Tunhuang banners, see Arthur Waley, *A Catalogue of Paintings*

- Recovered from Tunhuang* by Sir M. Annel Stein, K.C.L.E., *Preserved in the British Museum and the Museum of Central Asian Antiquities*, Delhi (London, 1931); Matsumoto Eiichi, *Tonkō ga no Kenkyū* (Researches on the Tunhuang Paintings), 2 vols. (Tōkyō, 1937); and Akiyama Terukazu, "Tonkō ni okeru hen-bun to kaiga" (Wall-paintings in Tunhuang and Their Relationship to Pien-wei), *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 211 (1960), 47-74. Uyeno Aki has attempted to date some of the Tunhuang banners on grounds of style, taking as an anchor Stein 99, which has an inscription indicating that it was painted during the Tibetan occupation. Stein 492 is thought to be a pair with it. Uyeno Aki considers that the following show an earlier technique, and so may be of the eighth century: Stein 85 and 90 (a pair); Stein 95, and Pelliot OE 1154 and Stein 224 (another pair). She considers that the following pairs are more advanced in style and may be of the late ninth or the tenth century: Stein 100 and 85; 97 and 510, 96 and 509. See her article "Banner Paintings Representing Buddha's Life from Tunhuang," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 285 (December 1972), 286 (March 1973).
34. The whole composition (P. 46) is visible in Pelliot, *Les Grottes* Vol. II, pl. 81. The Tunhuang Research Institute dates this cave Middle T'ang, i.e. between 766 and 820.
 35. Pelliot 162 E (not illustrated in *Les Grottes*).

CHAPTER VIII

1. Richard Barnhart, in *Winty Forests, Old Trees: Some Landscape Themes in Chinese Painting* (New York, 1972), gives a number of literary and poetic references.
2. *Wang Wei shih-shian* (Peking, 1959) chap. 14; tr. G. W. Robinson, *Poems of Wang Wei* 113, "The whites of his eyes" is a reference to the eccentric third-century poet Juan Chi who looked in this way at people he disliked.
3. *Ch'uan T'ang shih* (Peking, 1960) 5983; tr. A. Graham, *Poems of the Late T'ang* 127.
4. *Ch'uan T'ang shih* 4210; tr. Graham, *op. cit.*, 65.
5. Translated by Kiyohiko Munakata, *Ching Hao's Pi-fa-chi: A Note on the Art of the Brush* (Ascona, 1974) 13-14. As Munakata points out, however (39 n. 47), this *po* does not conform to descrip-

tions in a number of texts and poems he cites, although it is "more or less a standard *po* appearing in extant paintings"—at least from the Sung Dynasty onwards. A standard "correct" rendering is the "old *po*-tree often painted by Chü-jan and Wu Chen" in *Chieh-tzu-yüan* (Mai-mai Sze, *The Tao of Painting* II, pl. 58); the dotted foliage here, however, bears no relation to that of the cypress or cedar.

6. *Asvagoṣa, Saṃdarāṇadakāvyā* X; tr. E. Conzē, *Buddhist Scriptures* (Hammondsworth, 1959) 222-223. Conzē translates a similar passage from the *Sukhāvatīvyūha*, *ibid.*, 232-236.
7. See my *Birth of Landscape Painting in China* 176, 182.
8. Translated by J. D. Frodsham, *op. cit.*
9. Translated by A. Graham, *op. cit.*, 68.
10. For a full discussion of this painting, see Thomas Lawton, *Chinese Figure Painting* (Washington, D.C., 1973) 70-73. Lawton notes that the modelling of the tree is similar to that in the handscroll attributed to Sun Wei in the Shanghai Museum (my R93).
11. *Wang Yü-cheng chi chien-chu* (1736), chap. 14; tr. Robinson, *Poems of Wang Wei* 76.
12. For a report on this tomb see *Wen Wu* 1958.8.
13. For a note on the iconography of the water-moon Kuan Yin, see Arthur Waley, *A Catalogue of Paintings Recovered from Tun-lung xxxv-xxxvi*.
14. *The Vermilion Bird* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967) 187.

CHAPTER IX

1. The whole of this scroll is reproduced in *Three Hundred Masterpieces of Chinese Painting* (Taichung, 1969) I, pls. 5-14.
2. Quoted from a letter to the author of June 1976. I am very grateful to Dr. Sickman for his comments and for the opportunity to study this painting carefully in the Nelson Gallery.
3. "Some Rocks in Early Chinese Painting," *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 16 (1962) 79 and fig. 5.
4. For a reproduction in colour, see Archaeological Team of the Liaoning Provincial Museum, "Excavation of the Liao Dynasty Tomb at Yeh-maotai in Faku County, Liaoning Province," *Wen Wu* 12 (1975) pl. 1.

5. Colour reproduction of a detail in *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford Jr.*, Laurence Sickman, ed. (New York, 1962).
6. See Torii Ryūzō, *Illustrations to Archaeology: Supplementary to Culture of Liao Dynasty from Viewpoint of Archaeology* (Tōkyō, 1936) III, pls. 207, 208.
7. For a description of these illustrations, see *Nihon Kaiyōkan* (Tōkyō, 1971) III, 154.
8. These are almost impossible to reproduce in black and white. For good details in colour, see *ibid.*, pls. 135, 136.
9. Śubhakarāsīmha was one of the founders of Tantric Buddhism in China. Whole composition in *ibid.*, pl. 52.
10. For a study of this painting and reproduction of the whole, see *Nihon Kaiyōkan* II, pl. 55.
11. For a reproduction of the whole, see *ibid.*, III, pl. 21.
12. See *ibid.*, p. 41.

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1. Jataka stories. Tunhuang, Cave 423. Ceiling, Sun Dynasty.



2. Devotional scenes. Tunhuang, Cave 296. Ceiling, Sui Dynasty.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



3. Devotional scenes, Tunhuang, Cave 419. Ceiling, Sui Dynasty.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



4. The sacred mountain Girdhakūta and devotional scenes, Tunhuang, Cave 420. Sui Dynasty.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



5. Kuan Yin saves the faithful from drowning, and other devotional scenes. Tunhuang, Cave 420.
Ceiling. Sui Dynasty. Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



6.
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Tunhuang, Cave 332. VIIc.
Photograph: Lao Kan and
Shih Ch'ang-ju.



7.
Battle between cavalymen.
Tunhuang, Cave 332. VIIc.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



8.
Landscape with perils and other
scenes. Tunhuang, Cave 321.
South wall, right. VIIc.
Photograph: James C. M. Lo.



9.
Horsemen in a landscape.
Tunhuang, Cave 321. VIIc.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



10.

Chang Ch'ien crossing the desert,
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North wall. VIIc.
Photograph: Paul Pelliot.



11.

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South wall. VIIc.
Photograph: Lao Kan and
Shih Ch'ang-ju.



12. Miraculous events. Tunhuang, Cave 323. North wall, upper right, detail. VIIc.
Photograph James C. M. Lo.



13.
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Tunhuang, Cave 323, South
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14.
Rocky landscape beside
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Early T'ang.



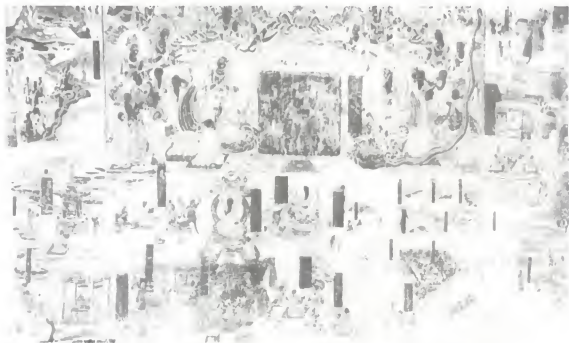
15. Landscape with devotees
worshipping Buddhas.
Tunhuang, Cave 209. Early
T'ang. Photograph: Lao Kan
and Shih Ch'ang-ju.



16. Buddha paradise. Tunhuang,
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Early VIIIc.
Photograph: Lao Kan
and Shih Ch'ang-ju.



17. Hunting. Tomb of Li Shou near Sian; entrance passage. T'ang Dynasty, 630.



18. Worshipping the Buddha. Tunhuang, Cave 217. South wall. VIIIc.
Photograph: Paul Pelliot.



19. Travelling pilgrims and other scenes. Tunhuang, Cave 217. South wall.
VIIIc. Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



20. Landscape. Tunhuang, Cave 217. North wall, upper left side. VIIIc.



21. Desert scene. Tunhuang, Cave 33. South wall. VIIIc.



22.

Left, top The perils, Tunhuang,
Cave 45, Left wall. VIIIc.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.

23.

Left, bottom The perils.
Tunhuang, Cave 45. Right
wall. VIIIc.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.

24.

The first meditation
of Queen Vaidehi.
Tunhuang, Cave 172. VIIIc.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.

25.

Distant landscape.
Tunhuang, Cave 172.
East wall. VIIIc.





26. The bodhisattva Samantabhadra in a landscape. Tunhuang, Cave 172.
East wall, right centre. VIIIc. Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



27. Śākyamuni and Amitābha?
Tunhuang, Cave 320. VIIIc.



28. The first meditation
of Queen Vardhī.
Tunhuang, Cave 320. VIIIc.



29. Encounter beneath a cliff.
Tunhuang, Cave 205.
Left wall, VIIIc.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



30. The first meditation
of Queen Vaidehi.
Tunhuang, Cave 205. VIIIc.



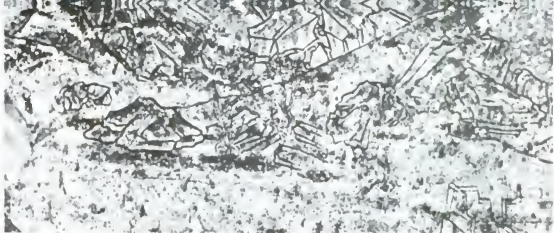
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Tunhuang, Cave 159. West niche, outer wall, left. 781.
Photograph: James C. M. Lo.



32. The bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in a landscape. Tunhuang, Cave 159.
West niche, outer wall, right. 781. Photograph: James C. M. Lo.

33. Landscape behind bodhisattva and monk. Tunhuang, Cave 159. Rear wall. 781. Redrawn.





34. Landscape detail. Tomb of I-te near Sian.
Entrance passage, west wall. 706.



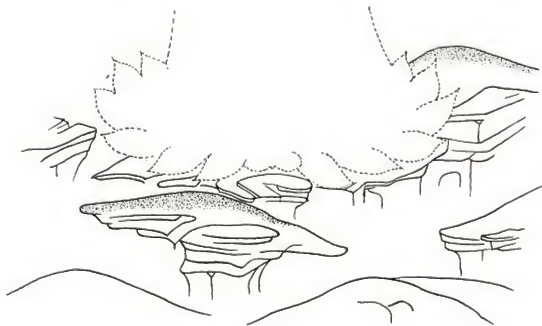
35. Landscape detail. Tomb of I-te near Sian.
Entrance passage, east wall. 706.

36. Landscape detail. Tomb of I-te near Sian. Entrance passage, west wall. 706.





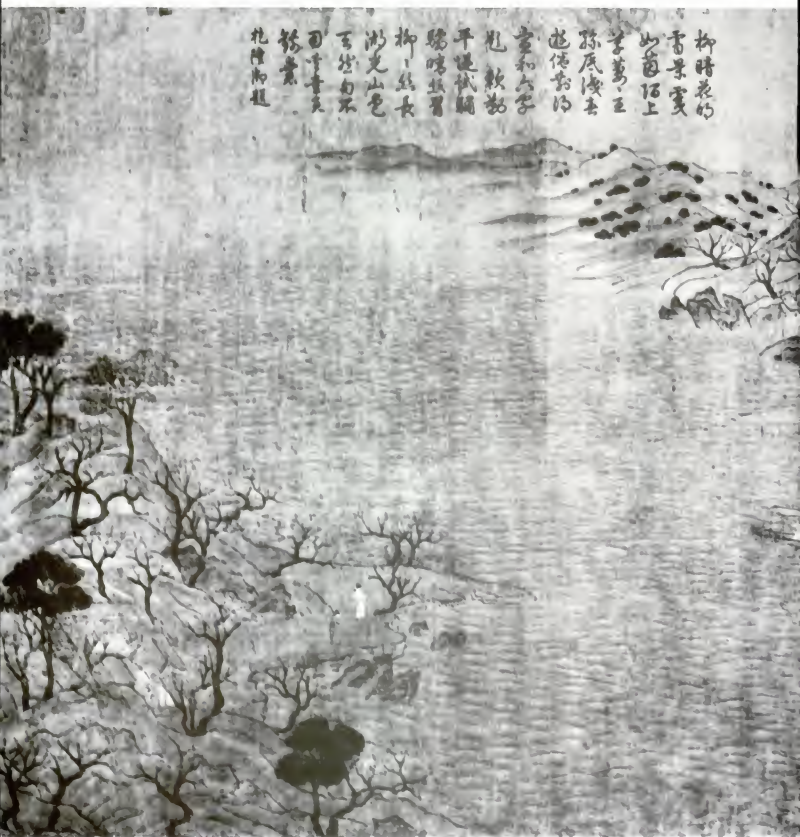
37. Landscape detail. Tomb of I-te near Sian.
Entrance passage, east wall. 706.



38. Detail of landscape beneath pedestal of Kannon.
Hōryūji, Nara. Kondō. Early VIIIc.



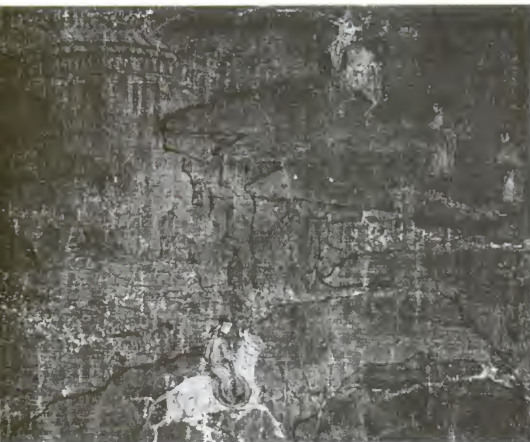
39. Travellers in a landscape. Tunhuang, Cave 103. South wall. VIIIc.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



40. Attributed to Chan Tzu-ch'ien. Sui Dynasty. Travelling in springtime.



Handscroll, ink and colour on silk. Palace Museum, Peking. Photograph: James Cahill.



41.

Attributed to
Chan Tzu-ch'ien.
Sui Dynasty.

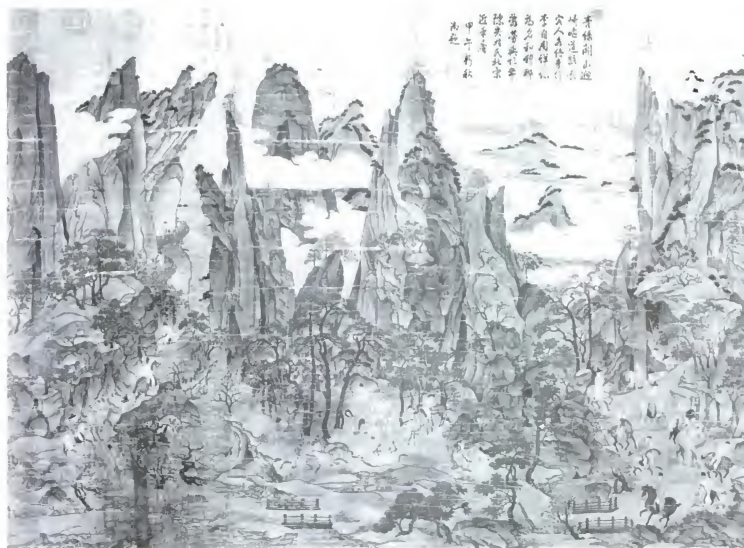
Travelling in springtime.
Handscroll, ink and colour
on silk. Detail.
Palace Museum, Peking.
Photograph: James Cahill.



42.

Attributed to
Chan Tzu-ch'ien.
Sui Dynasty.

Travelling in springtime.
Handscroll, ink and colour
on silk. Palace Museum.
Photograph: James Cahill.



43. Anonymous. Ming-huang's journey to Shu. Hanging scroll, ink and colour on silk. Date uncertain.
National Palace Museum, Taipei.



44.

Anonymous. Ming-huang's
journey to Shu.

Hanging scroll, ink and colour
on silk. Detail. Date uncertain.
National Palace Museum, Taipei.



45.

Anonymous. Ming-huang's
journey to Shu.

Hanging scroll, ink and colour
on silk. Detail. Date uncertain.
National Palace Museum, Taipei.



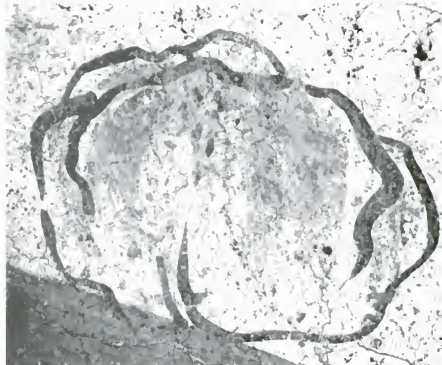
46. Landscape.
Tomb of Chang Huai near Sian.
Entrance passage, west wall. 706.



47. Rocky landscape.
Tomb of Chang Huai near Sian.
Entrance passage, west wall. 706.



48. Hunters in a landscape.
Tomb of Chang Huai near Sian.
Entrance passage, west wall. 706.



49. Rock. Tomb of Chang Huai near Sian.
Entrance passage, west wall, detail. 706.



50.

Hunters in a landscape.
Biwa A, painting on
plectrum-guard. VII or VIIIc.
Shōsōin Repository, Nara.
Photograph: Shōsōin
Office, Nara.

51.
Gentlemen enjoying
a view and composing poetry.
Biwa B, painting
on plectrum-guard.
VIIIc. Shōsōin.
Photograph: Shōsōin
Office, Nara.

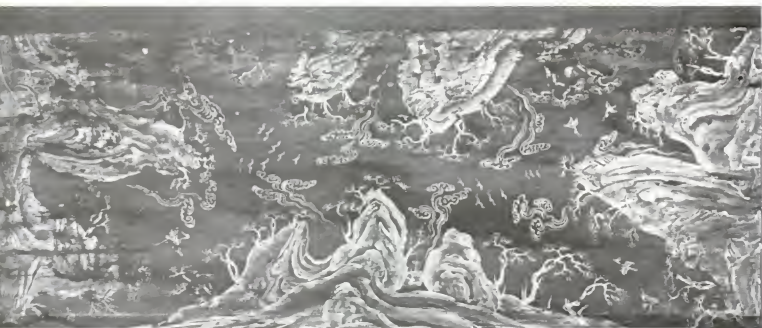




52. Elephant with musicians in a landscape.
Biwa C, painting on plectrum-guard.
VIIIc. Shōshōin.
Photograph: Shōshōin Office, Nara.



53. Detail of Biwa C. Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.



54.

Hawk attacks ducks.
Biwa D, painting on
plectrum-guard. VIIIc.
Shōsōin.

Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.



55.

Cover of

Brāhmarāja Sūtra scroll,
with landscape in gold
and silver. VIIIc. Shōsōin.

Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.



56.

Cover of black
persimmon-wood box
stained with sapan juice,
and decorated with landscapes
in gold and silver.
Late VIIIc. Shōsōin.

Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.



57.

Inside of cover of
mirror case with landscape
in gold and silver. VIIIc. Shōsōin.
Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.



58.

Zither. Paintings on
underside of tortoise-shell
plaque. VIIIc. Shōsōin.
Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.





59. Map of Tōdai-ji Precinct and surrounding hills, dated 756.
Ink on silk. Shōsōin. Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.

60.

Map of Tōdai-ji Precinct
and surrounding hills, dated 756.
Ink on silk, detail. Shōsōin
Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.



61.

Map of Minase,
Settsu Province, dated 756.
Ink on silk. Shōsōin.
Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.





62.

Map of Michimori,
Echizen Province, dated 766.

Ink on silk. Shōsōin.

Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.

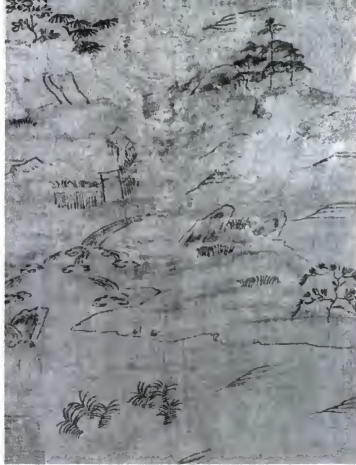


63.

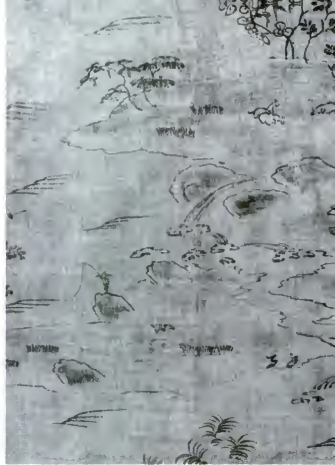
Landscape. Ink on hemp cloth.

VIIIc. Shōsōin.

Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.



64. Landscape. Ink on hemp cloth.
VIIIc. Shōsōin.
Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.

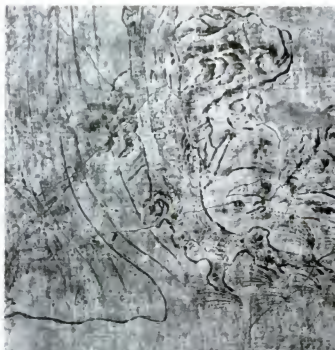


65. Landscape. Ink on hemp cloth.
VIIIc. Shōsōin.
Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.

66. Screen with ladies under trees.
Panel no. 3. Ink on paper. VIIIc. Shōsōin.
Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.



67. Screen with ladies under trees.
Panel no. 4. Ink on paper. VIIIc. Shōsōin.
Photograph: Shōsōin Office, Nara.





言通之觀此功之善為泉臺太念死我所念我念求命

68. Scenes from the life of the Buddha. Ingakyō scroll, detail. Ink and colour on paper. VIIIc. Nara Museum.



從百時身覺身太雨太從太不苦當身太

69.
Ingakyō scroll, detail.
Ink and colour on paper.
VIIIc. Hōonin
(Jōbon-rendai-ji), Kyōtō.



70.
Ingakyō scroll, detail.
Ink and colour on paper.
VIIIc. Hōonin
(Jōbon-rendai-ji), Kyōtō.



前不厭太云我老日主介

71. Ingakyō scroll, detail. Ink and colour on paper. VIIIc. Hōonin (Jōbon-rendai-ji), Kyōtō.



72. Ingakyō scroll, detail. Ink and colour on paper. VIIIc. Seattle Art Museum.



73. Ingakyō scroll, detail.
Ink and colour on paper. VIIIc.
Hōonin (Jōbon-rendai-ji), Kyōtō.



74. Ingakyō scroll, detail. Ink and colour on paper. VIIIc. Hōonin (Jōbon-rendai-ji), Kyōtō.



75. Scenes from the life of the Buddha.
Tunhuang banner (Stein 97).
Ink and colour on silk.
VIIIc. British Museum, London.



76. The bath and first seven steps.
Tunhuang banner (Stein 99).
Ink and colour on silk.
VIII-IXc. British Museum.



77.

The simultaneous births, Tunhuang banner (Stein 94).
Ink and colour on silk.
VIII-IXc. British Museum.

78.

The simultaneous births, Tunhuang banner (Stein 94).
Ink and colour on silk.
VIII-IXc. British Museum.

79.

The austerities, Tunhuang banner (Stein 20).
Ink on silk. VIII-IXc.
British Museum.



80.

The story of Sujāti, detail.
Tunhuang banner (Stein 1).
VIII-IXc. British Museum.



81.

The story of Sujāti, detail.
Tunhuang banner (Stein 1).
VIII-IXc. British Museum.



82.

The story of Sujāti, detail.
Tunhuang banner (Stein 1).
VIII-IXc. British Museum.



83.
The story of Sujāti, detail.
Tunhuang banner (Stein 1).
VIII-IXc. British Museum.



84.
The story of Sujāti, detail.
Tunhuang banner (Stein 1).
VIII-IXc. British Museum.



85.
Paradise of Avalokiteśvara,
detail. Tunhuang banner (Stein 2).
Ink and colour on silk.
VIII-IXc. British Museum, London.



86.
Paradise of
Bhaishajyaguru, detail.
Tunhuang banner (Stein 36).
Ink and colour on silk.
VIII-IXc. British Museum.



87. Landscape in upper corner of right wall. Tunhuang, Cave 112. VIII-IXc.

88. Landscape above Buddha assembly. Tunhuang, Cave 369. VIII-IXc.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.





Photograph: Dominique Darbois.

89. Landscape above Buddha assembly, Tunhuang, Cave 369. VIII-IXc.
Photograph: Dominique Darbois.

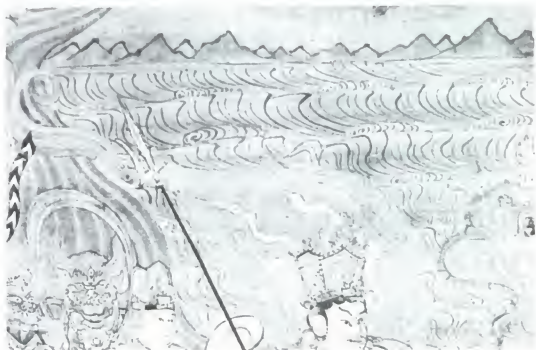




90. Mandala of 1,000-armed Avalokitesvara.
Tunhuang banner (Stein 33). Ink and colour on silk.
VIII-IXc. British Museum.



91. Landscape detail. Tunhuang, Cave 198. IX-Xc. Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



92. Vaiśrāvana crossing the ocean, landscape detail. Tunhuang banner (Stein 76).
Ink and colour on silk. VIII-IXc. British Museum.



93. Chang I-chao's procession. Tunhuang, Cave 156. IXc.



94. The storm-tossed Raudrakā, Tunhuang, Cave 196. IXc. Photograph: James C. M. Lo.

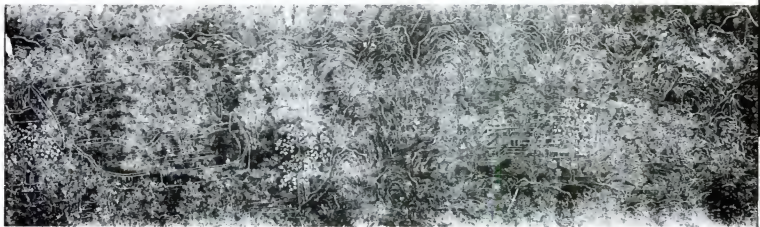


95.

The perils by water.

Tunhuang, Cave 288.

Photograph: Dominique Darbois.



96. After Wang Wei (699-761?): the Wang-ch'uan estate. Rubbing from a stone engraving.
Ming Dynasty. Princeton Art Museum, Princeton, N.J.



97. After Wang Wei? Snow on the river. Detail of a handscroll, ink on paper.
Ming Dynasty? Ogawa Collection, Tōkyō.



98. After Wang Wei? Clearing after snowfall. Detail of a handscroll, ink on silk.
Ming Dynasty? Honolulu Academy of Arts, Hawaii.



99. After Wang Wei? Clearing after snowfall. Detail of a handscroll, ink on silk. Ming Dynasty?
Honolulu Academy of Arts.



100. After Wang Wei? River under snow. Formerly Manchu Household Collection.



101. Wang Yüan-ch'i (1642-1715): The Wang-ch'uan Estate (1711).
Detail of a handscroll; ink and colour on paper. Based,
according to Wang's inscription, on the stone engravings;
Morse Collection, Princeton Art Museum.



102. Buddhist Paradise in a landscape. Modelled clay.
West side of base of Hōryū-ji Pagoda, Nara. Late VIIc.

103. Detail of mountains in paradise scene. Modelled clay.
East side of base of Hōryū-ji Pagoda, Nara. Late VIIc.





104. Fragment of a wall-painting.
Bāzāklīk, Turkestan.
Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin.



105. After Lu Hung (early VIIIc). Ten views of a thatched cottage.
Detail of a handscroll, ink on paper. Ming Dynasty. National Palace Museum, Taipei.



106. Landscape bearing signature of Ching Hao.
Hanging scroll, ink and colour on silk. Xc?
Nelson-Atkins Gallery of Art, Kansas City.



107. Landscape bearing signature of Ching Hao.
Ink and colour on silk. Detail. Xc? Nelson-Atkins Gallery of Art.



108. Landscape bearing signature of Ching Hao. Ink and colour on silk. Detail.
Xc? Nelson-Atkins Gallery of Art.

109.

Landscape bearing
signature of Ching Hao.
Ink and colour on silk.
Detail. Xc? Nelson-Atkins
Gallery of Art.



110.

Manjusri in a landscape.
Yü-lin, Kansu, Cave 2,
west wall right. X-XIc?
Photograph: James C. M. Lo.

111.

Landscape painting
excavated from a tomb
in Liaoning.
Hanging scroll, ink and colour
on silk. X-early XIc.





112. Samantabhadra in a landscape. Yü-lin, Kansu, Cave 2, west wall, left.
X-XIc? Photograph: James C. M. Lo.



113.

Samantabhadra in a landscape.
Yü-lin, Kansu, Cave 2, west wall, left.
Detail. X-XIc?

Photograph: James C. M. Lo.

114.

Springtime. Wall-painting
in a royal tomb, Liaoning.
X-early XIc.



115.
Autumn. Copy of
wall-painting in a
royal tomb, Liaoning. X-early Xlc.



116. Frontispiece to Daihannya-kyō;
one of a set of 2,739 scrolls
in Chūson-ji, Kyōtō.
Gold and silver paint on blue paper.
Fujiwara period, Xc.



117. The iron pagoda.
Painting on silk. Early Fujiwara period.
Xc. Fujita Art Museum, Osaka.



118. The Tôji screen. Ink and colour on paper. IXc.
 Photograph: Sakamoto Photo Research Laboratory, Tôkyô.

119.
 The Tôji screen. Detail. IXc.
 Photograph: Sakamoto Photo Research
 Laboratory, Tôkyô.





120. Hokkedō Mandara. Detail. Ink and colour on silk. IXc? Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



121. Nirvana. Detail. Ink and colour on silk. 1086. Kongobū-ji, Koyasan, Japan.

122. Nirvana. Detail.
Ink and colour on silk. 1086.
Kongobū-ji, Koyasan, Japan.



123. Amida Raigō. Detail.
Ink and colour on silk. Late XIc.
Kongobū-ji, Koyasan, Japan.





124. Arhat meditating. Detail.
Ink and colour on silk. Late Xle.
National Museum, Tôkyô.



125. Servant carrying a miniature rockery.
Detail of wall-painting in the tomb
of Chang Huai near Sian. 706.



126. Miniature rockery, polychrome, glazed pottery.
Part of a house model from a tomb in Shensi.
Tang Dynasty. Shensi Provincial Museum, Sian.

a discussion of the most popular landscape themes, and much material on the life and work of the Sui and T'ang landscape painters, both the great and the obscure. A feature of the book is the author's demonstration that the styles of painting and the attitudes to art of the scholar-gentry, hitherto thought to have evolved in the circle of the eleventh-century poet Su Tung-p'o, were already becoming well established by the middle of the T'ang Dynasty.



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Cover:

Hunters in a landscape. Detail of a wall painting in the tomb of Chang Huai near Sian. 706 A.D.

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